TIME SLIP/SILLIEST MOMENTS • VIDEO GAMES/ARTIST VS ARTIST • PLUS: TWO NEW FEATURES! • JOHN ROMITA JR. • JOHN BYRNE • THE X-MEN ARTISTS • KURT BUSIEK • AN ALL-NEW CONTEST!

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STAN LEE PRESENTS
MARVEL VISION #5
MAY 1996

TIMOTHY TUOHY
Can't spell worth beans

JIM BRENNAN
VITO INCORVAIA
Wish Tim could spell worth beans

CARLOS TOLEDO
Covers the fact that Tim can't spell

CHRIS CARROLL
MICHEL LÊ
MARC ROBINSON
MEL SANCHEZ
SHAWN WALKER
& DRAW THE LINE INC.
Laugh at Tim on a regular basis

MARK BERNARDO
BARRY DUTTER
JIM KRUEGER
BENNY POWELL
TOM ROLSTON
STEVE VRATTOS
POLLY WATSON
Know that they can spell

BILL ROSEMANN
Can spell "solicit" in his sleep

JACK ABEL
FLO STEINBERG
Help everybody spell better

DEB BRUST
Will tell you she can spell better

BOB HARRAS
Spells everything with an "X" in front

WILLIAM C. BEVINS, JR.
CEO, Marvel Entertainment
GERARD CALABRESE
President, Marvel Comics
JIM SOKOLOWSKI
Is sending Tim back to school

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!

That was the rousing battle cry that brought America's mightiest heroes together. Now in the month of May 1996, two of Marvel's greatest titles celebrate milestone issues. The Avengers mark their 400th issue while fellow founding Avenger, Thor, celebrates his 500th issue.

These characters have had some of the most incredible careers in the history of comics. Long lasting and always changing with the times, they have set a benchmark of longevity among the diversity of the Marvel Universe. Their exploits have been chronicled by legendary figures in the medium: Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Roy Thomas, Neal Adams, George Peréz, Jim Shooter, Roger Stern, John Byrne, Walt Simonson, John Buscema, Bob Harras, Terry Kavanagh, Steve Epting, Tom Palmer, Mike Deodato Jr. and many other talented individuals.

My own personal favorites are the Michelinie/Byrne run on the AVENGERS, #s 181-191, and Walt Simonson's incredible stint as both writer and artist of THOR, #s 338-368. For me, those issues were all about comics: fun, excitement and most importantly, adventure! If you want to experience the same feelings as I did when reading those books, then check out the back issue bins at your retailer. You never know what treasures you'll stumble across. More on that subject, next issue.

With all that said, be sure to check out this issue's expanded coverage of this once-in-a-lifetime Avenging event.

As usual, there's much more jam-packed into this issue including Tim Sale's contribution to what is becoming our most popular feature, Time Slip!

I'm done.

See ya in the funny pages.

Tim Tuohy

P.S. Look in this month's letters page for details on the First Annual "Tim Tuohy Can't Spell Worth Beans" Contest. You could win one of 10 Marvel Trade Paperberbacks that are up for grabs.

MAY 1995

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MARVEL

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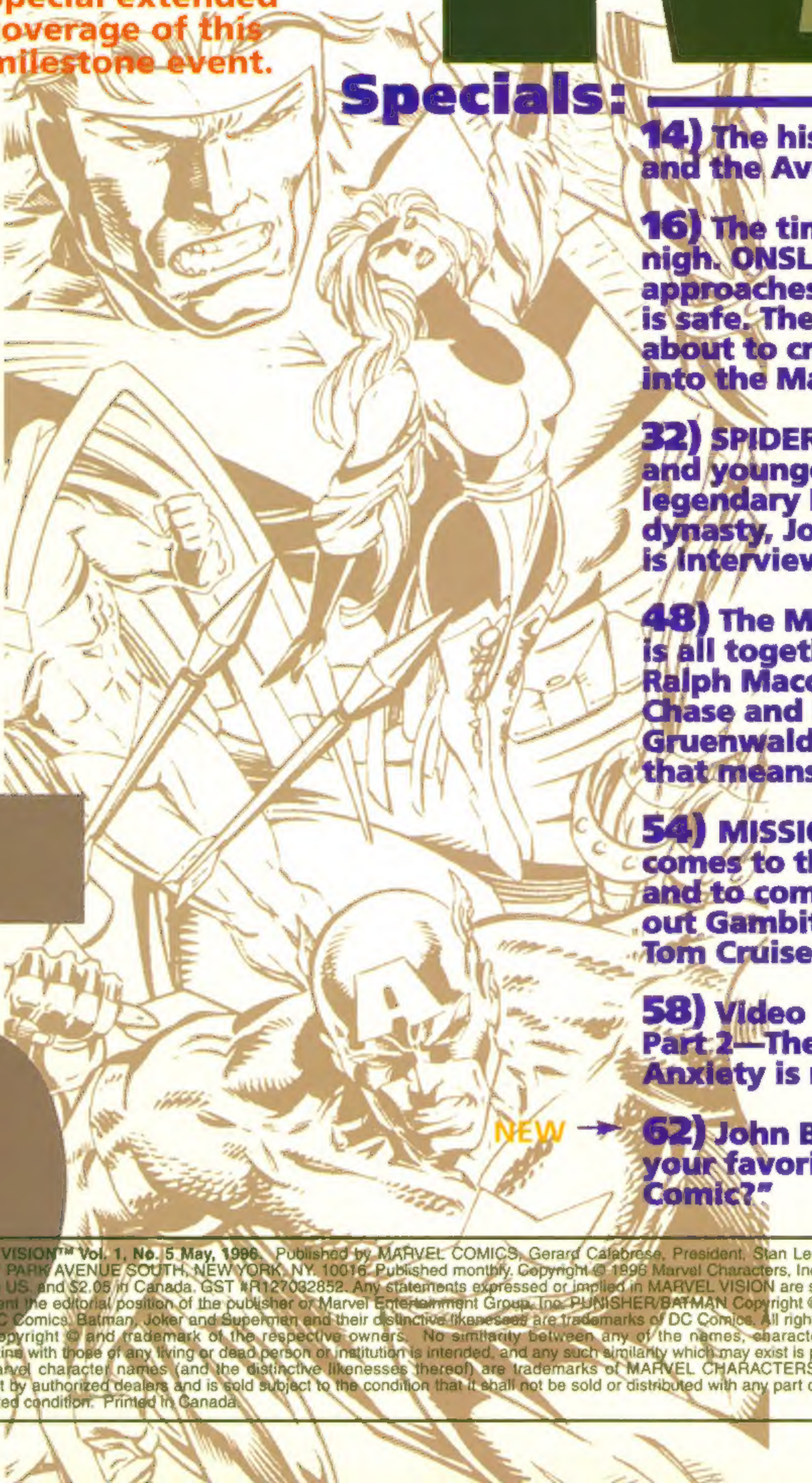
8) THOR reaches issue 500 and AVENGERS turns 400. Special extended coverage of this milestone event.



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14) The history of Thor and the Avengers.

16) The time is drawing nigh. ONSLAUGHT approaches and no one is safe. The X-Universe is about to crash headfirst into the Marvel Universe.

32) SPIDER-MAN artist and younger half of the legendary Romita art dynasty, John Romita Jr., is interviewed.

48) The Marvel Universe is all together again and Ralph Macchio, Bobbie Chase and Mark Gruenwald explain what that means to you.

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#5

MARVEL VISION™ Vol. 1, No. 5 May, 1996. Published by MARVEL COMICS, Gerard Calabrese, President, Stan Lee, Publisher. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, NY. 10016. Published monthly. Copyright © 1996 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $1.50 per copy in the US. and $2.05 in Canada. GST #R127032852. Any statements expressed or implied in MARVEL VISION are solely those of the columnists and do not represent the editorial position of the publisher or Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. PUNISHER/BATMAN Copyright © 1994 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. and DC Comics. Batman, Joker and Superman and their distinctive likenesses are trademarks of DC Comics. All rights reserved. All other non-Marvel artwork is Copyright © and trademark of the respective owners. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. MARVEL VISION and all Marvel character names (and the distinctive likenesses thereof) are trademarks of MARVEL CHARACTERS, INC. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. Printed in Canada.

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40) The different looks of the X-Men's artists. How each view Marvel's Mighty Mutants.

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Insights

Dear Marvel Vision,

Congratulations on a fabulous first issue of VISION! It was filled with just plain great stuff! I really enjoyed the interview with Dan Jurgens. The preview for Marvel vs. DC was great. I'm really looking forward to that one. On the Chin was really informative.

However, the best part of your magazine, I thought, was Time Slip. What a great concept! I've often thought the same thing, if characters would look different if designed today. The only thing I didn't like was that you should have used the entire Fantastic Four. After all, you have so many characters, and artists who you could get to draw them. You should do entire teams.

Well, that's all for now.

Thanks for the time.

Tony Newton
P. O. Box 277
Guildford NSW
Australia 2161

Tony's letter came to us after we had completed the letters page covering all your comments on issue #1, but I felt that we had to include it because it brings up the feature that's getting the most buzz: Time Slip. This feature is the brainchild of Marvel's own Jim Krueger. He has been instrumental in getting the artists that you've already seen and the ones yet to come. Look forward to contributions from John Paul Leon, Bill Sienkiewicz and Keith Giffen as well as this issue's own Tim Sale.

And on the flip side:

Dear Marvel Vision,

I recently received my copy of Previews #11 and with it, the first issue of Marvel VISION. Nice format, looks good, can't wait to look through it.

OK, page one, your editorial. Read that then check out the rest of the book. You end it with "we want to hear from you." You asked for it...

Next page, the table of contents. What good is it if the pages aren't numbered? Let's see...I want to read about the VERSUS Trading cards on page 52. Flip open the book, "Terminator" page. Hold there, check back to the contents page and see that it's page 47. OK, I just count five pages, here it is, the cards. You expect me to do that every month?

Stan Lee page, nothin wrong here.

News bits was pretty nice.

Dan Jurgens. The interviews are a nice idea and I enjoyed reading it, but the background graphics were too distracting and made me almost quit reading it a few times.

The Spider-Man titles, YAAAAAAGH! Way too cluttered and not very easy on the eyes. Just list the titles and information.

ToyBiz. Informative and easy to read. General Entertainment section had a nice layout and no distracting backgrounds. Try this in the Spider-Man section.

The poster, I loved it!

Marvel in the movies was a great page and easy to read too!

Artist vs. Artist, nice.

Creating Comics, those backgrounds again.

Time Slip had a really nice Kelley Jones page.

Well, please keep in mind that this is only my impression of the first issue and you did ask for comments. I guess my biggest gripes are the lack of page numbers and those crazy backgrounds. I suppose I should also add that I don't buy as many Marvel comics as I'd like, mainly due to what I feel are outrageous prices.

I really didn't intend to come off sounding so negative and I do hope my comments are of some help.

John Q. Adams
97 Willow St. #4
Lockport, NY 14094-4856

John, comments are and always will be appreciated. If you ever read the REN & STIMPY SPECIALS that I had the pleasure of editing, then you should know that I read every letter that comes in. I have a lot of fun reading what you

think about the "House of Ideas." Even though your letter came in after the letters page for issue #4 was completed, I'm going to send you a clean printout of the Jurgens interview.

Dear Marvel VISION,

I'd just like to say that I am really enjoying your publication. I was a loyal reader of Marvel Age who was sad to see it go. I'm glad that Marvel has created a suitable replacement with improved printing and a lower price as well.

I just have two requests that I would like to see in a future issue of Marvel VISION. First, how about a letters page? This is a big fan magazine, so why not have some fan input. Second, how about a Big John Buscema vs. Ron Lim Artist vs. Artist feature with both drawing the Silver Surfer? Since both artists have contributed greatly to the Surfer, it would be a treat to see an interpretation by two generations of top artists.

Kent Kochi
6829 Sandy Souza Way
Elk Grove, CA 95758

How about this instead. We do our regular version of Artist vs. Artist and have "Jazzy" John Romita Sr. (Kent started the nickname thing) draw his version of a particular Surfer scene opposite "Rambunctious" Ron Lim and then follow it up a month later with Romita Sr. against Buscema. Sound interesting? If you think so then drop us a line and we'll get cracking.

Dear Marvel ,

I just finished looking over Marvel VISION #2. It was dynamic! You covered and previewed some of the best writers and artists in the comic book industry today. VISION will become a regular magazine staple for me.

Unfortunately, I didn't pick up the first issue. Every comic book shop in my home town only had issue two. Issue one was sold out!

Anthony Aponte
635 Kesher Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95838

Issue #1 was a surprise hit. We hoped that it would be well received but we were overwhelmed with how well! There is one very simple thing that you can do to avoid missing a single issue of Marvel VISION or any other Marvel Comic. Go to the back section of each issue of VISION and use that order form. Your retailer will thank you for it and you'll know that when you go to your local shop, the books that you've been waiting for will be there.

Marvel
Vision Insights
C/O Marvel Comics
387 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016
Addresses withheld if requested but all letters must have a return address to be considered.

The First Annual "Tim Tuohy Can't Spell Worth Beans" Contest

Okay! Here it is! Ladies and Gentlemen! Boys and girls of all ages! Cats and dogs of every... Well if you read ALL of issue #4 and this month's editorial then you know that I goofed. Goofed in a way that has earned me ridicule beyond your belief, ridiculed in ways so vile even Don Rickles cringes. That's okay, it was all planned out (Yeah right!—Marc Robinson, design slug) so we could have this cool contest! You don't believe me? Well, enter the contest anyway! Here's all you have to do:

1) On a 3x5 card or anything similar, write down what you think the typo was that made me look more mentally challenged than Forrest Gump.

2) Send it in to : "Tim Tuohy Can't Spell Worth Beans" Contest
c/o Marvel VISION
387 Park Avenue South
New York NY 10016

3) The first ten (10) entries randomly picked that correctly identify the colossal cryptographic blunder will receive a Marvel Trade Paperback stolen right out of Jim (Ski) Sokolowski's office. (I run really fast!)

That's all for now and don't forget we'll be announcing the winner of the Generation X Fan Art contest in issue #7...we've gotten in tons of entries!

THE DAILY BUGLE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 1996 / Today, Hurricane Alert, winds NW 60-80 mph; mid 50's; Tomorrow, snow; Details, Pg. 24 **50¢**

AVENGERS: ATTACKED & ABDUCTED

By Ben Urich

NEW YORK CITY —Avengers Mansion came under siege late today in what resulted in the abduction of several important team members.

"It was . . . extraordinary!", said Edwin Jarvis, longtime aide and butler to the Avengers. "Master Thor . . . and Mistress Crystal . . . just suddenly up and disappeared!"

Local New York City authorities have initiated investigations, but few leads have been produced. "The only clue we've uncovered so far," said Lt. Stone of Code:Blue, "is that the abductor had a strange set of glowing eyes."

Sources close to the Mansion indicate that several team members happen to possess such eyes, including the perennial Avenger Vision and the newest induction to the ranks, Masque. "She'd have to be the main suspect here," said Stone; "after all, she has a past history of villainy." When asked about the possibility of one of the Avengers betraying their own, Jarvis refused to comment.

One other small fact that the police uncovered was that the abductees apparently whispered the word "Benedict" before disappearing. "What this name actually means," said Stone, "and whether or not it has any bearing on this case is simply speculation at this point."

CONTINUED IN AVENGERS #398

HEROES COME TO BLOWS: MR. FANTASTIC BATTLES SUB-MARINER

By Michael Marts

NEW YORK CITY —Reed Richards, aka Mr. Fantastic of the Fantastic Four, and Namor, the legendary Sub-Mariner engaged, in a fervored battle that traveled throughout several populated sections of the city earlier today.

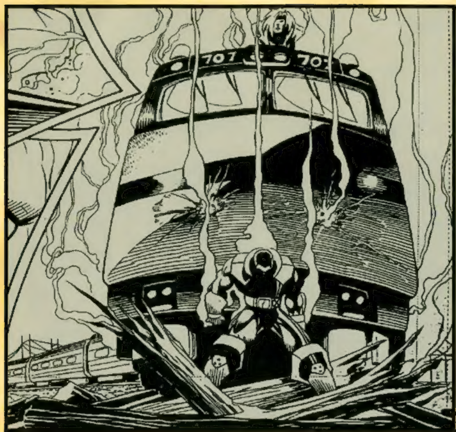
Police say that the fight lasted nearly two hours and encompassed an area which included Four Freedoms Plaza, a 23rd St. construction site, Macy's department store, and a #6-Train subway station.

"Both combatants showed total disregard for the safety of property and more importantly, for the local citizenry," local police said. Authorities reported that several auto-mobiles were extremely damaged, but miraculously, no people were harmed.

"What they're fighting about is no big mystery," said one eyewitness. "I saw this happen several years back between the two of them. Seems they've always had some feud going on over the Invisible Woman." After getting through to Four Freedoms Plaza, an FF spokesperson named Roberta refused to disclose any information regarding the alleged feud.

"I think you should jus' let 'em be," said a a mysterious large man in a trenchcoat and hat, "or I'll be forced to clobber ya!"

CONTINUED IN FANTASTIC FOUR #412



BOMB TRAIN ARRIVES IN PENN STATION

An Exclusive by Robbie Robertson

NEW YORK CITY — A runaway passenger train came crashing into Penn Station early Monday morning with several super-powered individuals riding atop.

The 8:58 out of Newark was filled with several hundred New Jersey commuters—and an additional danger. "The train could have been carrying some sort of mutate plague," said one Transit officer. "Our lab guys are inspecting the train now . . . checking it out." Several passengers were injured, but there were no fatalities.

The train seemed to veer out of control soon after leaving Newark when several super-powered individuals started clashing on top of the train. Eyewitnesses claim that the suspects were members of the outlaw group of mutant freedom fighters, the X-Men.

"There were three of them," said one commuter, "Bishop, that Gambit guy, and the Beast. Some people were really scared of them, but heck, those guys saved us!"

Other commuters shared differing opinions. "All of those muties should burn at the stake! Endangering our lives on our way to work to earn a honest day's pay . . . who do they think they are?!", said one man.

CONTINUED IN X-MEN #52

HOBGOBLIN RETURNS!

—U.P.I.

NEW YORK CITY — An abandoned warehouse on the Lower East Side was the site of a raging clash between Spider-Man and the Hobgoblin late last night.

One eyewitness said that Spider-Man was battling with a techno-terrorist group called Cell-12 when Hobgoblin decided to drop in and spoil the party. "He just came flyin' in outta nowhere," said Thomas D. Phalcoe. "One minute everybody's favorite wall-crawler was fightin' dese Cell-12 guys, and den the next second in flew ol' Hobby!"

Police report that Spider-Man sustained serious injuries during the fight with Hobgoblin, but that he disappeared before receiving proper medical care. "Hobgoblin looked different this time," said one officer on the scene. "I don't know, he just looked uglier, scarier, and more dangerous than I've ever seen him before." Another eyewitness claimed to have spotted noted genetic scientist Seward Trainer racing away in a van after the battle. Sources say that he was conversing with both the Hobgoblin and Spider-Man. Trainer, who has been known to associate with both Spider-Man and the Scarlet Spider on occasion, is currently under investigation by New York City police.

CONTINUED IN SPIDER-MAN #68

DOUBLE-SIZE GONZO!

HEY TRUE BELIEVER! Live up to your name and believe us when we tell you that May is gonna be the best month ever for Marvel Hero fans! That's when you can look for two double-sized anniversary issues featuring your favorite heroes to hit the stands! Yep, when you reach the comic shop you'll find the Avengers looking back at you from the cover of their 400th issue, and the mighty Thor will be swinging his hammer wide to avoid that big "#500" printed on the cover!

THOR, AVENGERS, CELEBRATE ANNIVERSARIES IN RAGIN' STYLE!

But don't you wonder what's gonna be inside those red-hot wraparound covers? What if you lay out your two clams fifty and get home to find out that AVENGERS #400 contains 48 pages of the Black Widow mending a rip in her costume? Or what if Thor spends his 500th issue blow-drying his hair and using Mjolnir to hang pictures around the house? Don't worry, it's not gonna happen to you, because you read Marvel VISION, and we go straight to the horse's mouth every time!

"I was around for issue #200, I edited issue #300, and now I'm back to edit issue #400. Am I old, or am I just lucky?" When confronted with prying questions as to the contents of AVENGERS #400, lucky old editor Mark Gruenwald responded by cramming himself into the third-grader-sized chair-and-desk set that he keeps in his office (for special occasions?) and spilling the beans, as they say in Spain, *con gusto*.

If your brain hasn't already turned to JELLO from all the excitement, get a load of the main plot! The story revolves around a time-traveller who comes back to the present to witness what history records as the last Avengers' adventure ever. Upon this man's return, the Avengers are suddenly attacked by manifestations of their own harrowing past adventures!

"If this were a record, it would be 'The Avengers' Greatest Hits,' says Gruenwald, struggling to describe the overwhelming spectacle. "We *guarantee* that anyone who has ever been called an Avenger will be in this story!"

According to Mark, the issue's centerpiece will be a whopping 30-plus-page story by regular writer Mark Waid. This story will be penciled by Mike Wieringo (special treat, campers!) and inked by honorary Avenger Tom Palmer. The issue will also feature a membership chart giving details on the fifty-plus super heroes who have belonged to the Avengers at one time or another!

Writer Mark Waid confirmed the seemingly impossible story. "It's the all-wallpaper issue," he joked when asked how he was going to fit over fifty Avengers into one story. "And don't forget, there's going to be ghosts of the past coming up to beat the baloney out of the current team...we're talking about a hundred villains here!" Or maybe a hundred and one: as issue #400 unravels, the time-traveller proves to be a gentleman of mysterious origin. Will he ultimately be revealed as the key to the Avengers' salvation, or the instrument of their destruction?

Speaking of instruments of destruction, those will figure highly as wielded by trolls and frost giants in the battle-scarred THOR #500! This 48-page issue breaks down like a paper factory before a bonfire!

"If this were a record, it would be *'The Avengers' Greatest Hits,'*

The first half of the book will be a smoking battlefield, courtesy of writer Bill Messner-Loebs and top artist Mike Deodato! After that, all h-e-double-hockeysticks breaks loose with a map of Asgard (Thor's homeland), a quiz that's stumped more than a few Marvel editors, and a dangerously informational article regarding the powers of Thor's hammer! Are you still standing? Good, because there's *MORE!!!!* There's gonna be a Thor quiz, a timeline chronicling the major events that have made up half a thousand issues of THOR, and strength comparison chart of Thor to his opponents! You'll get your money's worth on this one if you have to count out that $2.50 in *pennies!*

In case you have your doubts, though, Bill Messner-Loebs is more than happy to fill you in on the details. "Thor and the Enchantress are going to be sent to Asgard by Doctor Strange, only to find the place deserted by everyone they knew." The once-proud kingdom of Asgard is barren, and trolls and frost giants are fighting for the spoils. Thor and the Enchantress quickly go their separate ways, as Amora sides with the frost giants. Thor, much to his surprise, winds up fighting alongside a particularly large and ugly troll who was once his enemy.

"This should make (longtime *THOR* editor) Ralph Macchio very happy,"

chortles Messner-Loebs. "Ulik was the biggest and toughest troll in Asgard back in the Jack Kirby days—we're talking double-digit issues here. At one time, Ulik tried to prove that he was tougher than Thor. The dialogue in that issue borrowed heavily from Shakespeare; even Stan Lee couldn't keep a straight face at the end!"

Whether Messner-Loebs himself will borrow from the bard remains to be seen, but a sneak peek at the advance solicit sent out to retailers promised "hammer-through-the-helmet, 'Braveheart'-type action." Wow! It takes a special artist to show that kind of grisly carnage in a code-approved book, but Mike Deodato's more than up to the task! He could do it with boxing gloves on! But seriously, kids, the gloves are off for AVENGERS #400 and THOR #500, so if you like a good hard sock in the chops, there'll be two of them waiting for you at the comic shop this May!

—Polly Watson

HAMMERS & HEROES

The mighty Thor is the bloodson of Odin, ruler of the gods of Asgard, and Gaea, the goddess of the Earth. Because of his dual heritage, Thor has ever divided his time between Asgard and Earth.

When Thor was a boy, his father presented him with the gift of Mjolnir, a mystic mallet which could only be lifted by one who was truly worthy. Thor labored for many years, performing good deeds, until the day he could finally claim the hammer for his own.

Over the years, Thor became overconfident with his great strength. Odin felt his son needed to be taught a lesson in humility. So he took away Thor's hammer, stripped him of his power and memory, and sent him to Earth in the guise of a lame medical student named Don Blake. As Blake, Thor learned how to care for others, and how to deal with the limitations of his own crippled leg.

After ten years on Earth, Odin planted a suggestion in Blake's mind to travel to Norway, where Blake stumbled upon a wooden cane in a cave. Blake struck the cane against a boulder, and it transformed into the hammer of Thor, as Blake regained his godly form. In his first adventure, Thor took on the Stone Men from Saturn!

Some months later, Thor returned to Asgard to reclaim his rightful place among the gods. But he did not give up his medical practice on Earth. Thor maintained his Don Blake identity, and romanced a nurse named Jane Foster. When Odin disapproved of Thor's relationship with a mere mortal, Thor embarked on a quest to have Jane transformed into a god, but this quest was doomed to failure.

After Thor broke up with Jane, he went back to romancing his first love, the goddess Sif. The relationship of Thor and Sif has its series of ups and downs, but they seem destined to end up together.

A constant thorn in Thor's side has been his half-brother Loki, the god of evil. Loki grew up jealous of Thor's power, and will never rest until he has gotten the better of Thor. Once he even turned Thor into a frog!

Eventually, Thor gave up his identity as Don Blake, choosing instead a different mortal identity—that of construction worker Sigurd Jarlson. For a time, Thor shared his form with a mortal named Eric Masterson, though only one of them could occupy this plane of existence at a time. Eventually, Thor and Eric were separated.

Thor's comrades-in-arms include Beta Ray Bill, the Warriors Three, and his Earthbound allies, the mighty Avengers! Among Thor's foes are Ulik the Troll and Surtur the Fire Demon!

Over the centuries, Thor and Odin have had a very tempestuous relationship. Thor is constantly arousing the wrath of his father, who usually responds by banishing Thor from Asgard. But eventually the big lug changes his mind and lets his favorite son back in! Recently, Thor lost his godly powers and became trapped on Earth, along with the Enchantress! We can't think of anyone we'd rather be trapped with!

The Avengers first united when the evil god Loki hatched yet another plot to kill his hated half-brother The Mighty Thor! Loki's scheme backfired horribly— not only did Thor survive, but he assembled a super-team which included the Hulk, Iron Man, Ant-Man, and the Wasp! The Avengers had been born!

The team has experienced countless membership changes over the years; the first occurred in their second issue, when the temperamental Hulk quit the team! The next big shakeup came when the group revived Captain America from a 20-year deep-freeze and instantly made him a member! Wonder Man joined the team—and died in the very same issue!

The android, Vision, then joined, becoming the heart and soul of the team! Yellowjacket (Hank Pym) joined and married the Wasp a month later!

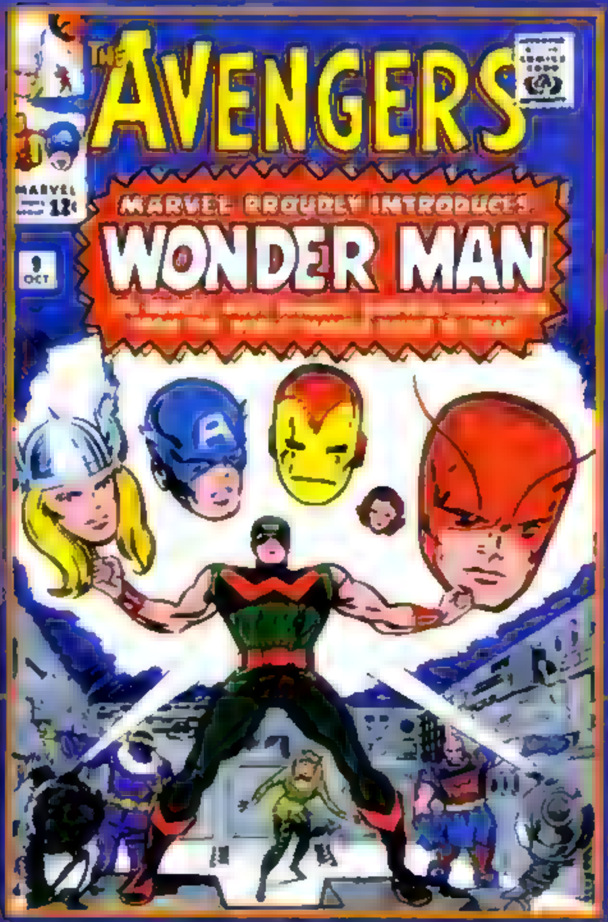
There followed an epic conflict which has still left repercussions throughout the Marvel Universe: the Kree/ Skrull War—one of the Avengers' all-time greatest battles!

After that came the introduction of two new members: Mantis, who would become a major threat to the team in the years to come, and the Swordsman, who died not long after. Two weddings occurred during this period: those of Quicksilver and Crystal, and the Vision and the Scarlet Witch.

Perhaps the most powerful menace ever faced by the Avengers was the being known as Korvac/Michael, who actually killed just about the entire team! (They got better!) Following that, the Avengers had to deal with a series of threats from within! First, Hank Pym succumbed to a bout of madness and took a lengthy absence from the world of crime-fighting!

Next, the Vision went insane and tried to take over the world. One of his crazy ideas did pay off: the formation of the West Coast Avengers.

Following the epic 19-part Galactic Storm conflict, the focus switched to the relationship between the Black Knight and Sersi, who had used an Eternal mind-trick to make Dane Whitman her betrothed! When Sersi became a threat to our universe and had to be sent away, Dane chose to follow.



From there, the Avengers went on to face their most devastating betrayal! Tony Stark, brainwashed by Kang and Mantis, murdered three Avengers! This tragic tale was chronicled in THE CROSSING/ TIMESLIDE.

Though the Avengers have endured some hardships of late, it is certain the team will thrive. For they are, and ever have been, the Earth's Mightiest Heroes!

THE HISTORY OF THOR AND THE AVENGERS

by BARRY DUTTER

Marvel's mightiest heroes have never even seen him, yet they fear him nonetheless. With a single blow, he hurled the 'unstoppable' Juggernaut from Canada to Hoboken, New Jersey in UNCANNY X-MEN #322. His mere emissary, Post, nearly single-handedly destroyed an entire team of X-Men in X-MEN #50. This May, not just the X-Men, but the entire Marvel Universe, will learn to fear the name Onslaught. He is their ultimate adversary, and his destructive rage will lay the groundwork for the coming year's Fantastic Four, Avengers, Captain America and Iron Man stories from Jim Lee and Rob Liefeld's studios!

How could one villain take the heroes who've toppled the likes of Thanos, Apocalypse, Galactus, Kang, Stryfe, Doctor Doom, the Beyonder and countless others, and make their blood run cold as the grave? The answer is about to become painfully apparent. Onslaught has world domination on his mind, and he's got the pure power to achieve his sinister goal. And even the combined might of the Avengers, the Fantastic Four, and the X-Men may not be able to stop him. Plus, rumor has it that this agent of evil has uncomfortably close ties to one of Marvel's most highly-hailed heroes. Once his identity is unveiled, the revelation will rock the comic book world. No lie.

CAN EVEN THE X-MEN, THE AVENGERS AND THE FANTASTIC FOUR WITHSTAND THE ONSLAUGHT OF... ONSLAUGHT?!?

What makes this event so incredible, so unbelievably cataclysmic that it can't be missed? Boy, you're just full of questions today, aren't you? Well, not much can be revealed right now, but suffice it to say that the X-Men will finally meet their adversary Onslaught and get so brutally beaten that it's all they can do to crawl to the Avengers doorstep to beg for help. Meanwhile, in the aftermath of X-Man's battle with Onslaught's newest emissary, the mutant monster known as 'Holocaust', young Nate desperately seeks the aid of his world's greatest hero—Magneto. But when he can't find the Master of Magnetism himself, he goes for the next best thing—Magneto's children, Quicksilver and Scarlet Witch. Unfortunately, considering his own distrust for this world's X-Men, when X-Man meets the children of the atom at Avengers Mansion, he might just finish off the job that Onslaught started! If you think there still aren't enough heroes mixed up in this melee, the Fantastic Four will join the fray as well when Reed and Sue's mutant son Franklin is apparently abducted by Onslaught!

Don't believe us? That's OK. You will. Just read CABLE #35, UNCANNY X-MEN #334, X-MEN #54, X-MAN #17 and AVENGERS #400, and you'll know it's true—one of Marvel's greatest epics is just beginning to unfold. You'll want to read it, if just to say you were there for the end of the Marvel Universe.

Who will survive? And who will be eradicated from existence in the Marvel Universe as we know it? Our heroes have reason to fear the answers. As for you, oh rambunctious reader, the only thing you need to fear is, if you don't read it, you'll miss out on the epic tale that will irrevocably change the face of the Marvel Universe forever! Be there.

AFTER THE FALLOUT OR (WHO WAS THAT MAESTRO?)

by Polly Watson

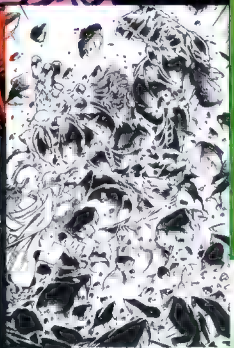
During the messy and often cold months of March and April, lots of Marvel denizens disappear, jetting off to warmer climes for sun-drenched weeks of snorkeling, swimming, sailing or reading their own comics while lounging safely in the shade of a Spider-Man beach umbrella. Some took time off to visit relatives in less toasty, but equally appealing parts of the country.

Still others locked themselves in their mothers' basements to play VectorMan and eat take-out from Wendy's for seven days straight. But one Marvelite vanished at the end of February and hasn't been seen or heard from since: the **Incredible Hulk!**

That's right, the green behemoth was engulfed by a massive nuclear explosion after throwing Thor clear of the blast at the end of INCREDIBLE HULK #440! Since then, fans have been left gnawing their fingernails down to the quick in consternation — after all, indications that the Hulk would not be returning were numerous. Firstly, despite the theory that cockroaches would outlive us all, were nuclear war to annihilate humanity tomorrow, ... the cockroaches feasting upon our ashy corpses would not be the ones who were walking around aimlessly at ground zero when the bomb fell. No, cockroaches could probably eat U-235 for dinner every night and live to pick their teeth with shards of plutonium, but if you want to see how a cockroach would take a direct nuclear hit, step on one and then run two miles through tall grass. Now look at the bottom of your shoe. What's left? Right! So why should the Hulk fare any better — he doesn't even have an exoskeleton!

Secondly, despite the fact that Betty, the love of his life has been risking a three-alarm blaze nightly by keeping a candle burning in the window for the missing giant, she's also been banging out a tell-all memoir of her life with the only guy on earth who's schizophrenic both mentally and physically. ("Hulk Fiction", issue #441.) Generally, the subjects of these kinds of books are either dead or safely stowed away in some clinic before a bereaved loved one cashes in a stack of chips like that.

And finally, has anyone else noticed that the book's logo has been changed to read "THE INCREDIBLE SHE-HULK" as of the last two issues (#441 and #442)? Sure, the "SHE" is just kinda hanging askew at the end, but if you look inside, the gorgeous green babe appears to have taken over the book with the same ease that the "X-Files" took over the national consciousness.



So we snuck upstairs armed with a maglite and a bag of jellybeans (to lob at editor Bobbie Chase and distract her from our activities), and we got away with a copy of the plot and most of a copy of the cover (it tore when we fought over it on our way downstairs).

So VISION got the dirt! And dirt is what the Hulk busts through on the cover of issue #443 - he's literally been underground all this time! Apparently, the bomb blast drove him into the earth, just like a tornado can cram a live rooster into a coke bottle!

So what's going on here? Is this Marvel's gentle way of introducing a new title? After all, an astounding amount of fan mail demanding the She-Hulk's appearance in various books lands on the Marvel doorstep every week. Or is it a delicate way of phasing out the HULK title?

Loyal reader, it's neither! The VISION offices are conveniently located directly beneath the Hulk's editorial offices.

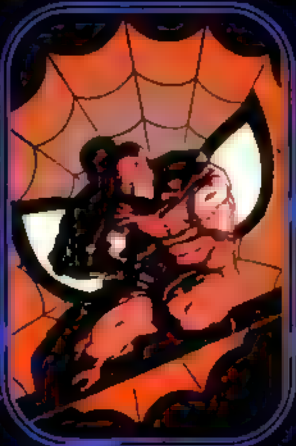
At least, he appears to have been underground. He's...shall we say, somewhat changed. He's certainly no longer the jolly green giant he was a half-dozen issues ago. He's a darker, greyer green, as he was when we saw him last in issue #440 And he's hunched over, sort of like that guy from Notre Dame (no, not Joe Montana), only bigger. And it's good that he's bigger, because from what we could gather from the pilfered plot, he's hanging out in the the nether regions of Canada, communing with bull moose.

But he's not gonna get that moose to himself for long! He's gonna have to share its affections with the comely, mohawked Janis! Remember her from "Future Imperfect?" She's Rick Jones' great-grand daughter,and in the "Future Imperfect" saga, she was responsible for bringing the Hulk forward in time to battle the evil being that he himself will one day become - the Maestro! Those issues ended with the Maestro being blown to gamma-kingdom come. (Are you getting a sense of deja vu yet? Remember, the Hulk was olive green, sporting a full beard, and claiming to be the Maestro when he was blown off the face of the earth in issue #440.)

So Janis breezes back into the present, again in pursuit of the Hulk. What does she need him for this time? Maybe she's going to enlist his help in stopping Rick Jones from becoming that terrible demon, the talk show host! At any rate, she'd better start making tracks herself, because she is being pursued in turn by a monstrous hunter/tracker type named Quarry, and it doesn't look like he has any intention of taking her alive!

In a nutshell, HULK #443 is loaded with chase scenes that put even the earliest episodes of "The Rockford Files" to shame! The issue also features guest appearances by several lumberjacks, a few trappers, some snow, and an arsonist! We can't say anything about the end, of course, (there aren't enough jelly beans in the world to buy that kind of confidence), but we can promise you that this issue is the beginning of something big!

ON SALE MAY 8TH



Captain America no. 453
Mark Waid/Ron Garney/Scott Koblish
"Man Without a Country" — Part 4 of 4

The startling story-arc concludes! The President is seconds away from assassination—and Cap is exiled half a world away! Who can save the day? Would you believe Doctor Doom? Looks like the Super Soldier has to make a deal with the devil! "CAPTAIN AMERICA is simply one of the best superhero books on the racks." (Overstreet's Fan)

Daredevil no.354
Karl Kesel/Cary Nord/Matt Ryan

Guest-starring Spider-Man! DD and the amazing arachnid—two great heroes who taste great together! Plus: is Matt Murdock defending Mr. Hyde? Now the Man Without Fear has a comic without a high price!

Fantastic Four Unplugged NO.6
Mike Lackey/Andrew Wildman/Tim Dzon

The good news: you and your terrorist toadies succeeded in hijacking a jumbo jet! The bad news: the Thing's a passenger! Do you think comics cost too much? So do we! Here's one of six 99 cent titles starring our most popular characters!

Foxfire no.4
Ian Edginton & Dan Abnett/Kevin West & Phil Moy/Bob Almond

Final issue—revealing the origin of Foxfire! As the end draws near, Foxfire discovers the answers to all her nagging questions lie in the hands of her greatest enemy: her own mother! The past, present and future collide in a mind-blowing battle that no one may survive!

Marvels no.1 (of 4)
Kurt Busiek/Alex Ross

Before KINGDOM COME there was MARVELS! Now the award-winning limited series (which brought widespread acclaim to both Kurt Busiek and Alex Ross) is reprinted in a biweekly, no-frills format. No acetate cover, no super-slick paper, no ads—just 48 pages of super storytelling and breathtaking art! A perfect format for newcomers and veteran readers who want a handy, affordable version of this superb saga.

Spider-Man 2099 no.45
Ben Raab/Mike McKone/Harry Candelario

Atlantis has flooded Downtown, and Spider-Man & Strange have to imitate their favorite "Baywatch" lifeguards! You think Spidey's a Hasselhoff kind of guy?

ON SALE MAY 15TH

Ghost Rider no.75
Ivan Velez Jr./Salvador Larroca/Sergio Melia

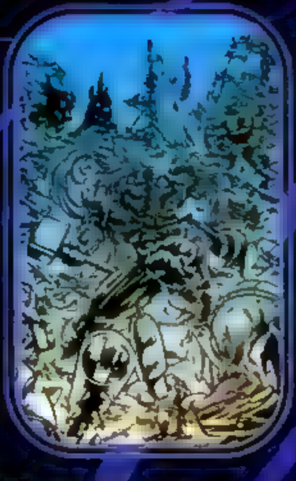
SOUL-SEARING SEVENTY-FIFTH ISSUE! The mystery villain who framed Ghost Rider is revealed, and now it's time for vengeance! Action-fans hit the jackpot as John Blaze, Ghost Rider and all the gang tear up the streets of Atlantic City!

Prime no.8
Painted Cover by Scott Kolins & Joel Naprstek
Gerard Jones/Scott Kolins
"Primal Rage" — Part 3 of 3

The drug house that manufactures the nasty narcotic known as Ultramax is scheduled for demolition—courtesy of Prime and Solitaire, the heroes that just say no!

Thor no.500
Wraparound Cover by Mike Deodato Jr.
William Messner-Loebs/Mike Deodato Jr.

DOUBLE-SIZED, HAMMER-HURLIN', SKULL-CRACKIN' ANNIVERSARY ISSUE! Trolls and Frost Giants have turned Asgard into a warzone, and Thor and the Enchantress are on opposite armies! Now the fate of the golden realm can only be decided by—a spelling bee? Not! It's a 48-page, bone-breakin' Braveheart-type brawl, and Thor's going to smack the kilt off of anyone who meets him on the blood-splattered battlefield! "THOR sales have gone through the roof with the addition of Mike Deodato Jr."



X-Nation 2099 no.5
Terry Kavanagh & Ben Raab/Eric Battle/Jon Holdredge

Guest-starring X-Men's Exodus! The Polar Icecaps are melting and the time of Atlantis' dominion is at hand! With Attuma's forces running wild, our young mutants search desperately for the Mutant Messiah! Could it be Exodus, or is he their greatest enemy?

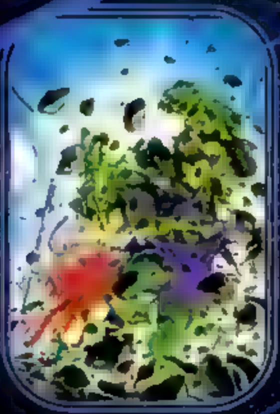
ON SALE MAY 22nd

Doom 2099 no.43

John Francis Moore/Jeff Lafferty

"Rage Against Time"-Part 4 of 4

Mr. Fantastic asks Doom to decide: save the last remaining Latverians or save the entire world. Sure, Doom'll let his people die-yeah, right!



Incredible Hulk no.443

Peter David/Angel Medina/Robin Riggs

The price is shrinking, but the Hulk is still the strongest one there is! From the pages of FUTURE IMPERFECT comes Janis, Rick Jones' granddaughter! Chased from her dark time, Janis herself pursues the Hulk-who's nowhere to be found! Plus: a mysterious green behemoth hits the scene-but is it the Hulk?

Iron Man no.330

Terry Kavanagh/Jimmy Cheung/Tim Dzon

Young Tony finds the last surviving Stark, confronts the villain who's haunted him since his rebirth, and faces the final fate of Stark Enterprises! Will our inexperienced Avenger fold under the weight of his heavy metal?

Marvels no.2 (of 4)

Kurt Busiek/Alex Ross

Before Kingdom Come there was MARVELS! Now the award-winning limited series is available in this biweekly, no-frills edition for those who missed out the first time!

Punisher no.9

John Ostrander/Tom Lyle

Punisher's taking a bite out of crime & we're taking a bite out of his comic's price! It's family feud time when the Geracis are targeted for the big hit! And if Frank Castle stands in the way he'll sleep with the fishes!

Ultraforce no.8

Ian Edginton & Dan Abnett/Gary Erskine

Prime goes postal! Can Ultraforce cure their crazed companion, or will they too become infected with his insanity? A "jump-on" point with a story that's downright contagious!

ON SALE MAY 29TH

All-New Exiles no.8

Mark Paniccia/Joyce Chin/Terry Pallot

Introducing the monstrous MAXIS! From a galaxy far, far away comes a power-stealing nanotech/ultra hybrid horror! Guess who's the welcoming committee?

Avengers no.400

Wraparound Cover by Mike Wieringo

Mark Waid/Mike Wieringo/Tom Palmer

EARTH'S MIGHTIEST DOUBLE-SIZED ANNIVERSARY ISSUE! A time traveler from the future slams into the present to witness-the last adventure of the Avengers?! Who's responsible for this tragedy? Maybe the gang of classic foes who strike in this awesome adventure! Plus: a surprise guest appearance that throws this title into the Onslaught war! "The Crossing" is over, and now Mark (CAPTAIN AMERICA) Waid and Mike (SPIDER-BOY) Wieringo invite new readers to join the Avengers as they embark on a new era! "The current bright spot in the Marvel Universe is definitely THE AVENGERS." (Overstreet's Fan)

Fantastic Four no.414

Tom DeFalco/Paul Ryan

Franklin encounters a key figure in the saga of Onslaught! Meanwhile, desperate to stop Hyperstorm, the FF race to find Galactus!

Fantastic Four 2099 no.7

Terry Kavanagh/Pascual Ferry

The resurrection of Namor! Is he humanity's savior-or the harbinger of its death? Plus: the Thing and the Invisible Woman must dive 20,000 leagues under the sea to save the Human Torch from a watery grave!

Over the Edge no.9

Bruce Sakow/Robert Brown/Mike Witherby

The man-monster called Skinner returns to exact his pound of flesh from Ghost Rider and John Blaze! Tour the hellfire-scarred underbelly of the Marvel Universe for under a buck!

Silver Surfer no.118

George Perez/Scot Eaton

The sky-rider is soaring, but the price of his comic is falling! In the wake of the battle between the legion of surfing aliens and the Blackbody, Norrin Radd fights to become the one, true Silver Surfer!

X-Men 2099 no.34

John Francis Moore/Jan Duursema

The sky is falling! The sky is falling! Actually, it's the water that's rising, and Atlantis is on the warpath-so what are the X-Men going to do about it?

TIME SLIP *offers the chance to see how the original Marvel Universe characters would look if first designed by today's hot creators.*

THIS TIME, A COMIC BOOK FEATURING A MAN WHO EMBODIES THE IDEALS OF BLIND JUSTICE. HE'S A MAN WITHOUT FEAR. HE'S GOING TO BE CALLED

DAREDEVIL!

Your name is Tim Sale. You've drawn CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN, BATMAN: LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT HALLOWEEN SPECIALS, DEATHBLOW, and the GAMBIT & WOLVERINE limited series. You continue to be one of the industry's most sought-after story-tellers. But this is different. This is Stan Lee who's talking to you. And Marvel Comics is about to be born...

"Now, Tim. This is how it works. Matt Murdock grew up on the wrong side of the tracks. Broken home. His mother is long-gone. And his father is a down-and-out boxer. A poor pug on the brink of poverty. So Matt is forced day and night by his well-meaning father to study hard and make something of himself. To the other kids in the neighborhood, he's a bookworm and a brown-noser. They jeer. They push. They shove. One name sticks out more than any other...Daredevil.

On his way home from school, Matt sees an old, blind man walking across the street about to be run over by an oncoming truck. Matt, though, is the one on the collision course with destiny, Tim. With no thought for himself, Matt leaps into the street, pushing the old man out of danger. But a canister filled with some sort of radioactive substance falls from the careening vehicle, striking Matt across the eyes... blinding him for life. This is one of two tragedies to strike Matt's life. Later, his father pays the price for not throwing a fight with his life.

Matt's a fighter. And he never gives up. Soon, he discovers that whatever stole his sight that day has also given him an enhanced sonar ability to feel and touch the world around him. With a costume based on his father's boxing gear, Matt takes to the streets to avenge his father's death.

It's here that he begins living two lives, each dedicated to the pursuit of justice. His first is as a renowned attorney, fighting to defend justice on every front the law provides for. His other life is that of the costumed vigilante that preys on those who think they've escaped the court's laws, as Daredevil, the Man Without Fear.

Now Tim, we don't have a lot of time here. I need sketches this afternoon. And a finished piece tomorrow!"

IT'S 1962 AGAIN...AND STAN LEE HAS JUST HAD A NEW IDEA!

TIMESLIP

THE LITTLE COMIC THAT COULD!

It has been called **"the best Spider-Man comic being produced today."** It has also been called **"the best *Marvel* comic being produced today."** It is written by one of the hottest, most popular writers in the comic book industry, and penciled by a rising star who is undoubtedly producing the best work of his career. It has garnered critical acclaim, fan approval and enthusiastic responses from veteran comics professionals. For such a package, you'd think it would also come with a hefty cover price, right?

Yet it costs... *ninety-nine cents?!*

Its name is **UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN**, and it's a crowd pleaser for new readers and older fans alike.

During the early months of 1995, when Marvel decided to give the idea of a 99 cent line of comics a try, one of the definite components of this planned project was a new Spider-Man title. *Bob Budiansky*, the Editor in Chief of the Spider-Man Group at the time, met with the editorial team of *Tom Brevoort* and (ahem) yours truly, who would be producing the new book, to discuss the concept behind it.

It was decided right from the start that the new book should be accessible to readers who had never picked up a Spider-Man comic before, who might be put off by the continuity-heavy current events of the four "core" Spider-Man titles. Thus the new book would not tie in to the current continuity, instead telling self-contained stories spanning no more than one or two issues.

It was ultimately decided that the series would take place in the past, telling all-new stories, but would use the early issues of **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** by *Stan Lee* and *Steve Ditko* as reference points and launchpads. During the research phase of the project, it was discovered that there were plenty of time gaps between issues – sometimes even between *panels* in which new, heretofore untold adventures could have occurred. The new series would fill those gaps, and give readers new insights on the teenaged Spider-Man/Peter Parker and the classic supporting cast. With a concept now determined, all that was needed was a creative team.

As it turned out, the man who would end up writing **UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN** approached the editors, rather than vice versa. *Kurt Busiek* had already written the critically acclaimed, phenomenally successful **MARVELS** limited series, along with the last few issues of the **NIGHT THRASHER** series, and was looking for a regular title to write for Marvel. He had heard about the upcoming **UNTOLD TALES** book and called Tom Brevoort, asking to be considered for the writing assignment. Unknown to Busiek, he was already on the list of writers under consideration, but he had beaten Brevoort to the punch. Without a firm commitment from Brevoort, Busiek then enthusiastically went ahead and wrote up a proposal for the series, which he sent in several days after speaking to the editor. That proposal got him the job. Soon after, work began on the first plot.

"I look at **UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN** as the companion book to those early issues of **AMAZING**, " explains Tom Brevoort. "In essence, it's what **THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN** (the second monthly Spider-Man title, launched in 1975) would have been, had it been started in 1964. As with **SPECTACULAR**, back when it was the only other Spidey book, we're running parallel to **AMAZING**, making reference to the events of those stories, but telling our own and fitting them neatly into the continuity. The major difference, of course, is that we're running parallel to stories published over thirty years ago!"

With Busiek in place, an artist had to be found, one who could evoke the feel and spirit of the Lee/Ditko period, but would also be able to translate it into a modern look, with modern sensibilities in terms of layouts and storytelling. It was yours truly, the ever-suffering assistant editor,

who suggested *Pat Olliffe*.

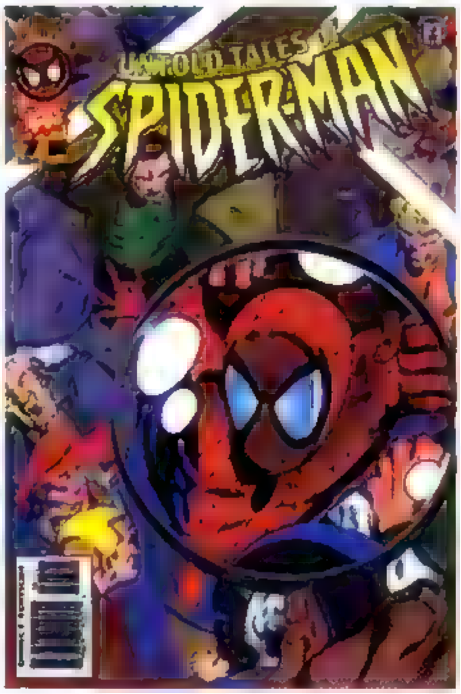
Olliffe was finishing up his impressive run on **WARLOCK AND THE INFINITY WATCH** series, and was looking for a monthly assignment when the call came, asking Olliffe if he would be interested in penciling **UNTOLD TALES.** Olliffe was very enthusiastic about the project, and agreed to do a sample page, showing how he would depict the wall-crawler in his early days. That sample page was greeted with much praise by the editors, and Olliffe was assigned to the book immediately.

Deciding that the book would benefit greatly from an inker with a very contemporary, sleek inking style, the editors approached *Al Vey*, fresh from his success on the **ADVENTURES OF CYCLOPS AND PHOENIX** limited series, and invited him to come aboard. With co-inker *Pam Eklund* coming along to ably assist him, Vey was able to commit to the book, and **UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN** was off and running. The rest, as they say, is history.

"I'm really enjoying working on this book," Busiek says with a laugh. "Spidey is one of the best characters ever created for comics, and to be able to play with him at a time when he was at his peak in terms of character possibilities – everything he takes for granted now was very new to him then – it was an opportunity I just could not pass up."

Olliffe reports that he is also having a great time on the book, and offered some insights on how he approaches each issue.

"Looking back on the pin-up, even though everyone liked it and it got me the job, I realize that the Spider-Man figure was too big. When I started working on the book, I took a closer look at the Ditko stuff, and readers seem to recognize that Ditko



influence. No one has seemed to notice in my work, however, the artist I looked to the most when it comes to Spider-Man is *Rick Leonardi.*"

Citing Leonardi's work on **SPIDER-MAN 2099**, Olliffe says, "Hands down, I think he best captures the fluid quality of the character, he keeps the figure moving and he manages to retain the spidery elements of the figure. My whole approach to art has been influenced by *Neal Adams*, but Leonardi has been my major influence on Spider-Man."

Busiek says that he particularly enjoys the research that he must do for each issue of **UNTOLD TALES.** "Investigating what Stan and Steve did with Spidey occasionally turns up elements and ideas that I think are tailor-made for **UNTOLD TALES.**"

For example, the fact that Peter Parker's glasses were smashed in **AMAZING #8,** and that he never had them replaced, became the basis of **UNTOLD TALES #7,** in which the young Parker's trip to the optometrist causes him to become part of the arch-villain Electro's latest scheme.

"With the work of Stan Lee, Steve Ditko and *John Romita Sr.* as my source material, I'll never run out of stuff that can be used!" Busiek comments.

Olliffe says that he enjoys doing the research as well. "I do as much research as time allows," he explains. "It's fun to look at all the older stuff, because through that, you make a connection to that era." He points out that he also tosses in little in-jokes, which readers well-versed in Spider-Man history can spot in the backgrounds of many of his pages. "Those are just little treasure hunts for people more familiar with the old stories. New readers won't even notice that stuff, it's not important to the story at all, so they won't feel

like they're missing anything."

In future issues, readers can expect to see more stories involving classic Spider-Man villains and new ones created especially for **UNTOLD TALES**, such as the Scorcher (from issue #1). There will also be further development of the supporting cast – the original Lee/Ditko characters (Flash Thompson, Liz Allen) and the new ones created by Busiek and Olliffe, such as Jason Ionello, Sally Avril and Sean "Tiny" McKeever. Betty Brant, in particular, will be getting the lion's share of attention in issue #12, as her secret past is finally revealed.

Busiek reports that issue #13 will be a *big* "surprise issue" – especially to readers who think that nothing major can ever happen in **UNTOLD TALES**! Busiek is tight-lipped about this important event, but hints that it will affect the book and the cast significantly. And planned for issue #16 is a story told from the point of view of a certain gorgeous, redheaded party girl who hasn't even met Peter Parker yet in the book's continuity, but will play a very important role in his life later on. Guess who! "We did something similar with Harry Osborn in #8," Busiek explains.

So it seems that there is a bright future for Spider-Man's past, with **UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN** taking readers and professionals alike by storm. And at ninety-nine cents, this little gem is a bargain at twice the price!

Pat Olliffe's Original Piece for Untold Tales.

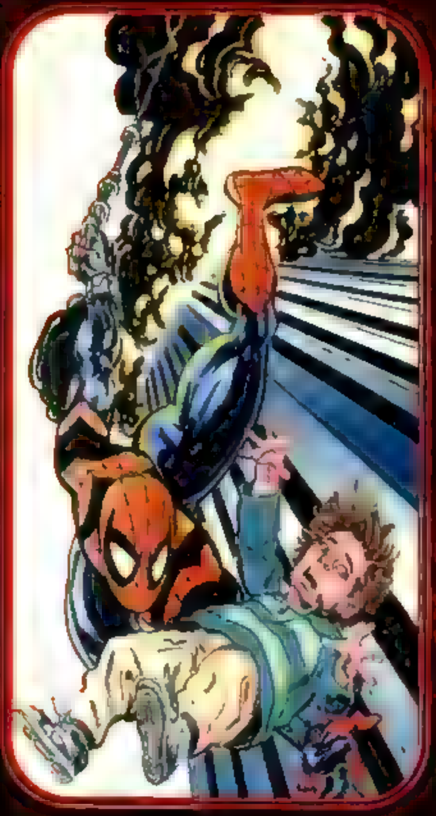
SPIDER-MAN FAMILY

ON SALE MAY 8TH

Sensational Spider-Man no.6

Dan Jurgens/Dan Jurgens/Klaus Janson
New 40-Page Format

She loves Ben Reilly, but hates Spider-Man–and now she knows they're one and the same! It's the gut-wrenching, heart-breaking resolution to the saga of Jessica Carradine, the daughter of the Burgler! Dan (MARVEL VERSUS DC) Jurgens invites new readers to witness a turning point in the life of Spider-Man!



ON SALE MAY 15TH

Amazing Spider-Man no.413

Tom DeFalco/Mark Bagley/Larry Mahlstedt

Spider-Man's trapped in someone's twisted take on "Toy Story!" Is it a case of "Honey, I Shrunk the Superhero"–or is he being sent on a head-trip to infinity and beyond by Mysterio? One comic, one complete adventure – your wish is our command!

Untold Tales Of Spider-Man no.11

Kurt Busiek/Pat Olliffe/Al Vey

Spidey's shocked to meet the new team of Electro and the Eel! Plus: Flash Thompson wants to be Peter Parker's best friend and Bluebird, a new heroine, wants to be the web-head's partner! "As much fun to read as the great Stan Lee/Steve Ditko comics of yesteryear...and just as important, it's only 99 cents!" (Combo)

ON SALE MAY 22nd

The Adventures Of Spider-Man no.4

Nel Yomtov/Alex Saviuk

Continuing the all-new tales of arachnid excitement presented in the animated style!

Green Goblin no.10

Tom DeFalco/Scott McDaniel/Derek Fisher

When the Daily Bugle offers a reward for info about the new Green Goblin, Phil Urich sings like a canary! Big mistake-because Arcade (fiendish foe of the X-Men) is tapping into the tips, and his Murderworld Amusement Park never fails to thrill- and kill!

Spider-Man no.70

Howard Mackie/John Romita Jr./Al Williamson

New 40-Page Format

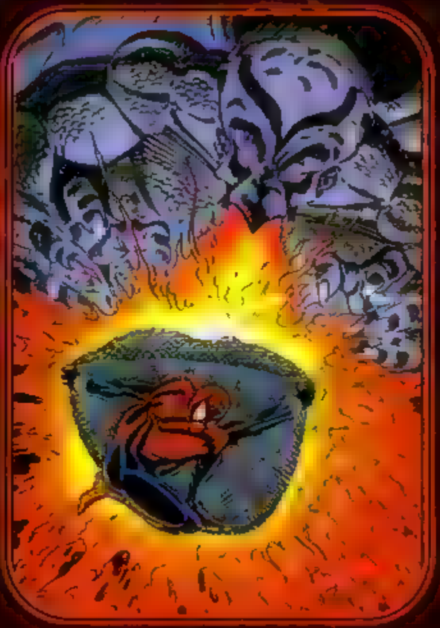
The Big Apple erupts in violence as a new crimelord begins his ascension to power in the underworld. Spider-Man vows to stop the spree, only to find out that the game has gotten a lot nastier since the good ol' days! Continuing the renaissance of classic Spidey action that hooked a generation of readers!

ON SALE MAY 29TH

New Warriors no.73

Evan Skolnick/Patrick Zircher/Andrew Pepoy

The origin of Torpedo is revealed as the deadly Dire Wraith returns! Only Rich Rider can terminate the alien, but he lost his Nova power- or did he?



Spectacular Spider-Man no.236

Todd Dezago/Sal Buscema

Will O' Wisp is about to get painfully downsized, courtesy of Roxxon, the corporation from Hell! And if you have a problem with that, take your complaint to the company's newest ax-man: the gargantuan Dragon Man! All of you longtime Spider-Man maniacs will be happy to see the return of these "friendly" faces-but not Spidey!

Venom: The Hunted no.3 of 3

Larry Hama/Duncan Rouleau/John Stangeland

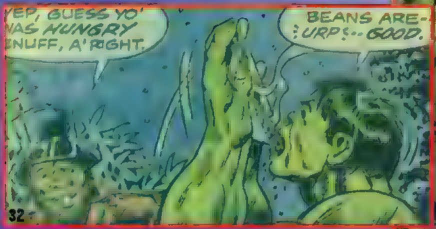
The savage story arc concludes! Trapped into a corner like a rabid badger, Venom snaps and goes for the jugular of the symbiote-hunting predator, Xenophage! Plus: the Jury/Hybrid serial concludes in this 48-page final issue!

MARVEL'S SILLIEST MOMENTS

HULK eats BEANS

IT was while wandering through the Canadian wilderness that the Hulk first developed his love of beans! The hungry Hulk stumbled upon a lovable hobo named Crackajack Jackson (INCREDIBLE HULK #182), who offered ol' Greenskin a plate of this gastronomic delight. Thus began Hulk's passion for beans—a love affair which culminated with this bizarre shopping spree from the pages of DEFENDERS #89!

Here's the set-up at the time, the Hulk was a member of America's most beloved super-non-team, the Defenders. The team had just moved into its new headquarters—a house in suburban New Jersey! Bruce Banner was sent to the supermarket to fetch some grub, and, along the way, the frustrations of shopping caused him to Hulk out! (We know the feeling!) After busting up a supermarket robbery alongside his teammate, the Valkyrie, Hulk got back to the business at hand



He loaded a cart up full o' beans, and even paid for this haul in cash! (So, he came up a little short! Math was never the Hulk's specialty!) That night, Hulk served up big, heaping bowls of beans to all his friends! (And the bathroom at Defenders HQ was never the same again!) Rumor has it that Dr. Banner still has a bizarre obsession with this magical food—but he'd never admit to it today!

—[illegible]

Mark Bernardo : Well, I'm here with the legendary John Romita, Jr....

John Romita Jr. : Oh, god! I sound old!

MB: Okay... how about the great John Romita, Jr.... working on my [Mark is assistant editor to Spider head honcho, Ralph Macchio.—Tim] cover to SPIDER-MAN #68, by the way. Let's start at the beginning. When did you actually realize that you wanted to draw for a living? Didn't you once tell me a story about seeing your dad at work...?

" I DON'T REMEMBER WANTING TO DO

JR: Yeah! I went up to my attic just to see what my dad was doing. This was after many years of him doing romance comics. I didn't even know it was comics, just that it was romance artwork, and I was bored to tears by it like any seven-year-old boy would be. He was exhausted every day. He'd go upstairs clean-shaven and come down two days later with a full growth of beard... Who knew what he was doing? All I knew was we had food on the table! I went up there one day, and saw the cover to DAREDEVIL #12 with Ka-Zar on it... and the eyes must have popped out of my head! It was a revelation! This was so cool! I was hooked. To a seven-year-old who had only seen romance comics, this was the be-all and end-all right here!

John Romita Jr. has a long history at Marvel Comics. Not only is he the son of Living Legend, John Romita Sr., he is a well known artist in his own right. Having been involved in memorable runs on AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, IRON MAN, DAREDEVIL and THE UNCANNY X-MEN, John has returned to the character he knows best Spider-Man. John took time out of his hectic schedule to talk to Spider-Man assistant editor Mark Bernardo and let us know what's new for this junior living legend.

MB: So you never wanted to do anything else?

JR: I don't remember wanting to do anything else... except maybe be a baseball player. I played a lot of stickball growing up in Queens, and I was pretty good at it. But I never got too big, so when I got to high school, it was like, "Ha ha ha! Shrimp!" When you're in high school, and you're small, and there's a lot of guys bigger than you... it's like being a comedian, who can talk his way out of things by being funny. I used to talk my way out of things by doing sketches and drawings. Because of this, I had two groups of friends. I hung out with the artistic people, and I was also friends with the athletes, because I played with them.

So time passes in high school, and you've got to make a decision about what you want to do, and I was like, "Hey, all I can do is draw! What can I do with that?" And somebody said, go to art college. I said, "Art college? You mean I can go

four more years just drawing? I don't have to have any responsibility? All right!!"

MB: (Laughter) Well, it seems to have done well by you.

JR: Yeah, and within two years I had found work at Marvel doing sketches for the British department. Then I was doing touch-ups and clean-ups on the black-and-white Conan magazines... couple of pin-ups and frontispieces for some other black-and-white magazines... then I got a couple of covers... and then Scott Edelman asked me if I wanted to do IRON MAN. Scott didn't believe in nepotism, but he didn't believe in anti-

ANYTHING ELSE..."
JOHN ROMITA JR.

nepotism either! If you could do the work, you got the work. I had previously done a six page nightmare called "Chaos at the Coffee Bean" for an AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL...

MB: I was just going to say that you were conveniently glossing over that one, John!

JR: Yeah, I can't hide from that one. (Both laugh) That's the skeleton in the closet! It was six pages, Al Milgrom saved it for me in the inks, and I guess (then editor in chief) Archie Goodwin must have liked me, because he accepted it! I remember thinking, "They're gonna pay me for this mess?!" It was terrible.

MB: Well, you've got to start somewhere.

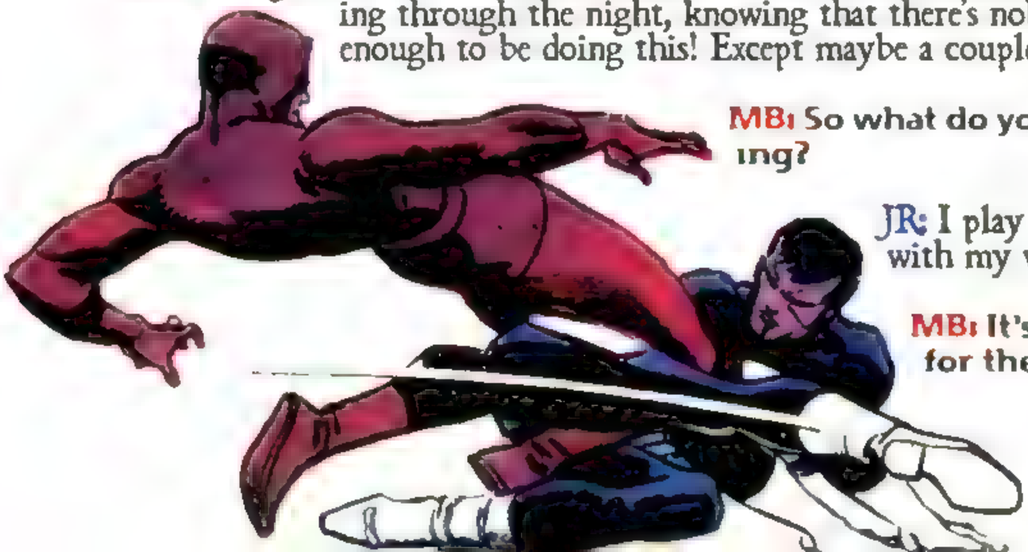
JR: Once I got IRON MAN, I suddenly learned a lot more in the space of a couple of months, and I just got better and better.

MB: On the subject of other artists, are there any, besides your dad, who you consider an influence?

JR: Well, if I narrow it down to guys in comics, my dad always made sure I had a wide range of education naturally, there's my father; what else could I do but look and learn from his stuff? There's Kirby, Buscema, Gene Colan, Joe Kubert... guys like that. In the industry now, there's a lot of guys I still follow. John Byrne, Frank Miller, Walt Simonson, Howard Chaykin, Mike Mignola. They're my contemporaries, but they're guys whose stuff I like looking at. Jim Lee's a great artist. I also look at the AKIRA books, and get some inspiration from that.

MB: So what's a typical workday in the life of John Romita, Jr.?

JR: I get up before six and go to the gym. Gotta work out, because I'm getting near forty, and I don't want to be a fat forty-year-old! I work out for two hours, I come back and sit down for breakfast, and I'm at work by nine o'clock. I put in my ten or twelve hours, and that's that. At night, it's dinner with the wife and kids, and so on... I try not to work through the night anymore, though I do if it's a serious deadline. Plus, there's something really romantic about working through the night, knowing that there's nobody else in the world stupid enough to be doing this! Except maybe a couple other cartoonists! (Both laugh)



MB: So what do you do when you're not working?

JR: I play racquetball, I run... I hang out with my wife; she's a lot of fun.

MB: It's good to squeeze some time for the wife in there! (Laughter)

JR: Oh, yeah! If she reads this and doesn't see her name, she'll say, "Hey! Where's my name?" My wife Kathy is the center point of my life, so when I'm not working... there's Kathy. And we have a baby on the way. It's a boy, we found out, so I'm real excited. The Romita name will go on! (Laughter)

MB: A third generation of Spider-artists, possibly?

JR: I don't know what this kid's going to do for a living! I'll just try to do what my father did in raising me. Everything he did was right. So I'm hoping not to force anything on him, and that he'll be happy with whatever he does. So when I'm not working, it's pretty much family time.

MB: You and Howard Mackie on SPIDER-MAN seem to be a pretty winning combination. How would you describe your working relationship?

JR: Well, I consider myself a good friend of his first, so that's important. There're no preconceived notions, no ego getting in the way. He says what's on his mind, I say what's on mine. We have similar styles, as far as what we like. It's a great relationship. I'll work on anything he wants me to work on. I've worked with Frank Miller, with John Byrne... and I enjoy working with Howard just as much as I did with those two guys. And he likes my artwork! (Laughs)

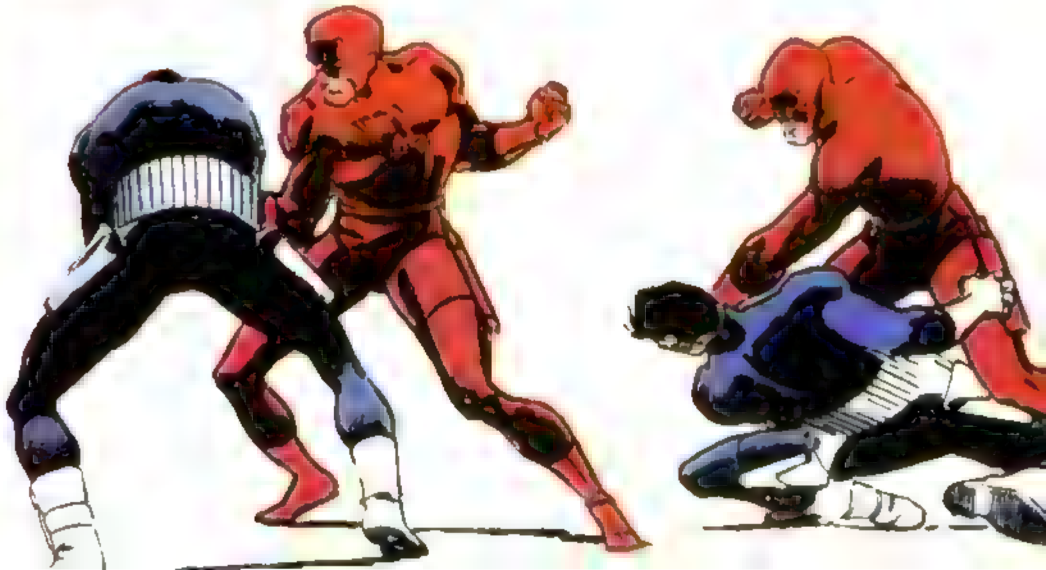
MB: That's always a plus! Still on the subject of Spider-Man, you seem to have a special affinity for the character. It must be in the genes. (John laughs) What's your take on what a Spider-book should be? What should be in there every issue?

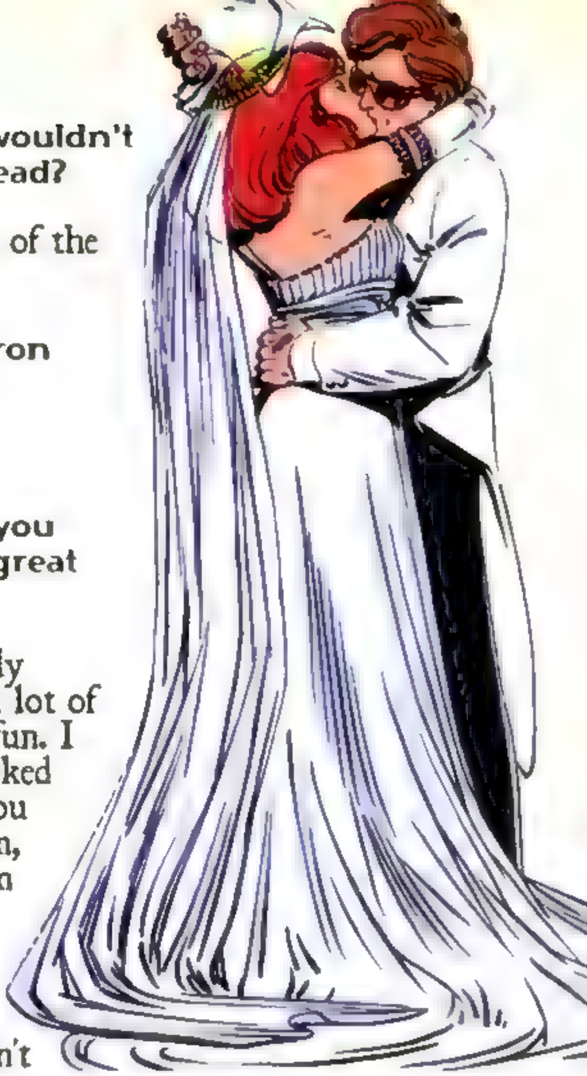
JR: In every issue there should be some kind of display of what the character can do. I don't know if that's considered necessary anymore, but I like to see it. I like to see Spider-Man display his strength, which is something you don't see very often. And he has that agility. He doesn't look spidery enough to me anymore. He's had his legs and hips broken in the past several years by so many artists...! I know he can do things no one else can do, but he can't recover from a broken hip very quickly!

MB: So who are some of your favorite spidey villains?

JR: Well, the Kingpin's number one. I love the Kingpin! I like the Hobgoblin, as long as he's not done too 'Jokerish.' I liked doing Kraven the couple of times that I did him. But there's so many other characters. I can't stand goofy costumed characters! I can't stand Rocket Racer type of characters, or that guy that flew around on a pumpkin. I forget what his name was...

MB: Jack O'Lantern?





JR: Yeah! (Laughter, then groaning) Oh, boy...!

MB: So you're saying that if you got super-powers, you wouldn't want to go bouncing around with a pumpkin on your head?

JR: (Laughs) Nah! I don't think so. I'd probably get laughed out of the Villains Union! (Both laugh)

MB: You've worked on so much, The X-Men, Daredevil, Iron Man, lots of stuff. Star Brand...

JR: Whoa, there's another skeleton in the closet!

MB: Are there any characters, Marvel or otherwise, that you haven't done that you'd like to take a crack at? You did a great Batman in PUNISHER/BATMAN...

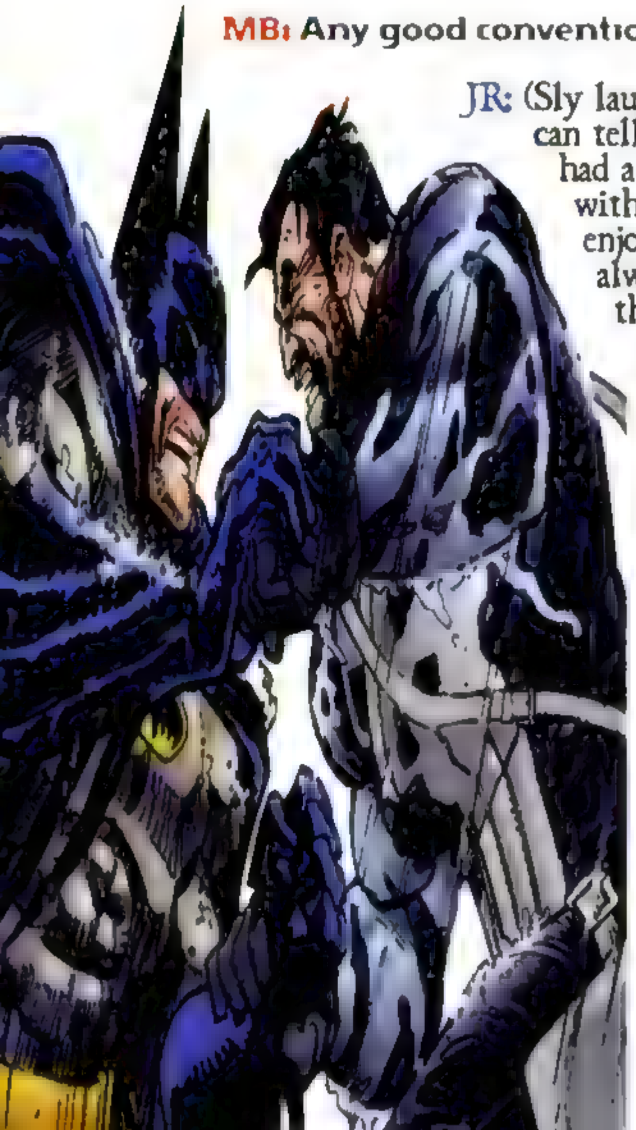
JR: I didn't think I would like doing Batman at first, but I really enjoyed it! It was great! He's got this cloak that you can throw a lot of shadow onto, to make him look real sinister... that was a lot of fun. I enjoyed doing the Joker, even though I used to think he just looked too... stupid! He always looked just silly. I always thought of, you know, Cesar Romero! (Laughter) Then I got a chance to do him, and I made him look maniacal without being goofy. We put him in an Armani suit, and (now, Batman editor) Archie Goodwin liked it. I thought the book came out pretty good. Nobody bought the darn thing, but it seems to be selling more now! I'm signing more of them now than I did when it came out!

Let's see... I don't know if I'd like to do Superman. I don't know. I might enjoy doing him, because I didn't expect to enjoy Batman and I did, so who knows? I'd probably enjoy all the "original" Marvel guys: Fantastic Four, Hulk, Captain America, Thor... the Hulk sticks out in my mind, because I like doing the big crazy characters. Not the Banner Hulk, but the crazy Hulk, the stupid Hulk.

MB: You're a guy that likes going to conventions, right?

JR: Yeah, I love talking to the kids. I absolutely do.

MB: Any good convention stories?



JR: (Sly laughter) Uh... I've got plenty of good stories, none of which I can tell! (Both laugh) I used to hang out with Bob Layton, and we had a lot of good times. Conventions were more of a social issue with a lot of us when we were younger. We used to go out and enjoy the city we were visiting. Those were great times. I'll always wax melancholy about those days. Other than meeting the fans, which is the most important thing, it's a great reunion of old friends. Some of these guys I only see once a year, so I really enjoy that.

MB: Any parting thoughts for the people reading this?

JR: Yes! Start enjoying comics again, because they're going to be comics again. Not pin-up books. The best thing about comics is that every time they get stale, someone has to stand up and say, "This is boring. Do something!" and then it's done. I think the fans will be happy with the stuff we're putting out... especially the Spider-Man books!

MB: Hope so! Thanks for your time, John! And how's that cover coming?

JR: Hey, I'm almost done!

MARK BERNARDO
INTERVIEWER

ADVERTISEMENT

MUTANT LEAD:

THE TECHNIQUES OF THE X-PENCILERS

IAN CHURCHILL ON CABLE...

"I pick what I consider to be the strongest image on the page and use that as a focal point to work the other panels around. After reading the plot, I generally go with my first instinct because it's usually the right one. It's pointless trying to second-guess yourself. When I approach a character, I always begin with the head and work downward. I work in two stages, the *first* being a tight, light sketch and the second step is straight to complete pencils."

Carlos Pacheco on EXCALIBUR

"I don't like creating stories. In fact, I'd like to create history. or at least be able to add threads of time to the lives of those characters that, in their time, helped form part of my own life. Everytime I face the challenge of drawing Nightcrawler, Moira MacTaggert, Colossus, and Shadowcat, I can't help thinking of the paradox posed by that vintage issue FANTASTIC FOUR #176: They DO exist, and my duty is to make the most accurate versions possible. With the rest, I can do whatever I please.

The hardest part of my job comes when I have to translate all the rich histories of these fantastic characters onto paper. It's not the case of transplanting the physics of those 'flesh and bone' beings to the page (I wouldn't be able to do it, and even if I could, they'd still be versions) but to obtain the subtlest look, a stare, their way of moving and that's not always easy...if I've even accomplished it at all." →

← Chris Bachalo on GENERATION X

"When I approach each issue of GEN X, the first thing I do is study the plot to find some thread or theme that I can latch on to for the entire issue. For example, in issue #17 Skin has an encounter with the Executioner at an abandoned circus. Using the circus as a theme, I've integrated circus-related imagery into the design and layout of the book. There are tent stripes all over the place and Banshee narrates the tale as a circus ringmaster. [Sort of reminds you of the cover to UNCANNY X-MEN #111.–Tim] I try to make each issue an entire package. 90% of what I do is dictated by the plot, it's that important."

JOE MADUREIRA ON THE UNCANNY X-MEN ←

"When I get a story from Scott [Lobdell], I usually try to visualize it as a movie. 'How would the Japanese Anime gods taclkle this?' Is the question that I ask myself over and over. I will then proceed to layout the page trying to keep a cinematic feel. I may even watch some animation for inspiration.

ADAM KUBERT ON WOLVERINE →

"How do I approach drawing WOLVERINE? Simple...

#1) Pull out a blindingly white piece of Marvel art board.
#2) Read Mr. Hama's plot.
#3) Cautiously take a sip of my 'nuked' medium regular Dunkin' Donuts coffee.
#4) Pick up my trusty HB pencil.
#5) Gently insert it into my electric sharpener.
#6) Re-read Mr. Hama's plot.
#7) Get up and ask Andy if he's got any reference on a 9mm auto Glock with a rotating magazine.
#8) Sit back down after re-'nuking' my medium, regular Dunkin' Donuts coffee.
#9) Put pencil to paper and try to tell the best, most dramatic and fun-to-read story I possibly can (and still be home by nine for 'Seinfeld')."

Steve Skroce on X-MAN

"I like to take a very cinematic approach to what I do in X-MAN. If you look at any good action film, the scenes are varied in their camera placement. Very rarely will the camera remain static; it pans, cuts and changes focal lengths constantly. That's what I do for action, but that won't work in a quiet setting. For those scenes, I try to echo what the character is feeling in the background. This approach works really well for those dark and somber moments. And if all else fails I'll trace something that looked really good (laughs)."

ANDY KUBERT ON X-MEN

"When I'm starting a new story, I'll read the plot through first, writing notes and trying to put together reference (or, bugging Ben Raab for it). Then I'll rough out about 9 pages at a clip. Roughs are really, really loose pencils. This is the stage for the storytelling, layout and design of the page. No definitive outlines just shapes.

Next, I'll tighten the roughs to definitive outlines; this is the tight breakdown stage. No blacks or rendering, just outlines. From this stage, I'll do all the actual rendering and spotting blacks. Then send them off to be inked. A normal day for me starts at around 7-7:30 a.m. and goes til about 6 p.m., six days a week.

In all honesty, drawing X-MEN is the best that it gets."

ON SALE MAY 8TH

Cable no.33
Jeph Loeb/Ian Churchill/Scott Hanna
New 40-Page Format

Cable vs. Post, the emissary of Onslaught, the enigmatic Post strikes–but is this attack more than just a mission for his master? What is Cable's connection to Post–and to Onslaught? The saga that will rearrange the face of the Marvel Universe continues here!

Uncanny X-Men no.334
Scott Lobdell/Joe Madureira/Tim Townsend
New 40-Page Format

Who can stop the Juggernaut? Onslaught can! Ol' Jugg-head (who Onslaught slammed from Canada to Hoboken in UNCANNY X-MEN #322) comes to Jean Grey for some mind massaging. Can Jean pierce the mental block that may reveal the identity of Onslaught?

ON SALE MAY 15TH

The Adventures of the X-Men no.4
Ralph Macchio/ Ben Herrera/ Mike Miller

The demon N'Garai (fresh from WOLVERINE '95) have overrun Salem Center! Now only Cyclops remains free, but can one man stop the minions of the dark dimension from conquering our world? Like THE ADVENTURES OF SPIDER-MAN, this budget-priced title offers readers a decidedly different take on their favorite characters.

Generation X no.17
Scott Lobdell/Chris Bachalo/Mark BuckinghamNew
40-Page Format

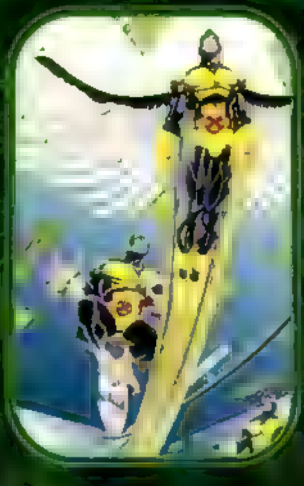
Chris Bachalo returns to the pages of GENERATION X! The X-Cutioner (last seen in the pages of X-MAN #10) is here too–and Skin must face him alone!

Origin of Generation X — Trade paperback
Various

Collected for the first time: the birth of Generation X! They've conquered comics, toys, and TV; now their incredible origin is presented in one handy volume! Including the sprawling "Phalanx Covenant" and GENERATION X #1! Launching a new look for the children of the atom, this massive 336-page tome features the talents of Chris Bachalo, Scott Lobdell, Joe Madureira, Adam Kubert, Andy Kubert and more!

Professor X & the X-Men no.9
Jorge Gonzalez/Nick Gnazzo/Ian Akin

The modern retellings of the early days of the X-Men continue as the Beast quits the team to become a professional wrassler! Meeting him in the main event: Unus the Untouchable! But how can you slap a sleeper-hold on a guy you can't even touch? Yet another affordable introduction to the most popular characters in comics!



X-Factor no.124
Howard Mackie/Jeff Matsuda/Al Milgrom
New 40-Page Format

It's a whole new X-Factor–thanks to Sabretooth, Wildchild, Mystique, and new penciler Jeff (MAGNETO AND THE METAL MEN) Matsuda! Who is the covert agency that is molding the team? And why are they turning them into mutant-hunting hounds? Big changes charge this "jump-on" chapter!

ON SALE MAY 22ND

Excalibur no.99
Warren Ellis/Casey Jones/Tom Simmons
New 40-Page Format

Guest-starring Bishop's arch-foe, Mountjoy! Colossus, Nightcrawler, Shadowcat and the crew enjoy tea time with the European Hellfire Club-and their new member, Mountjoy! Which Club member is he disguised as, what is his mission, and more importantly, will he share the crumpets?

What If? no.87
Cover by Ian Churchill
Dan Abnett & Andy Lanning/Frank Teran

"What If Sabretooth Slaughtered the X-Men?" A deadly game of cat-and-mouse ensues when Jubilee stumbles into the corpse-ridden halls of the devastated X-Mansion!

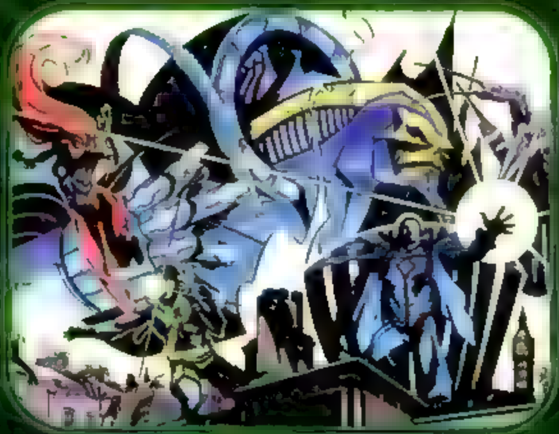
X-Man no.17
Terry Kavanagh/Steve Skroce/Bud Larosa
New 40-Page Format

X-Man vs. Onslaught's new emissary: Holocaust! When the dust settles, Nate has only one person left to trust: Magneto, or the next best thing-Magneto's children, Quicksilver and the Scarlet Witch! Continued in AVENGERS #400!

X-Men no.54
Mark Waid/Andy Kubert/Cam Smith
New 40-Page Format

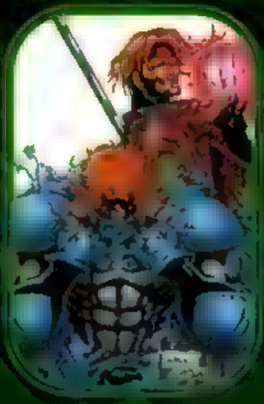
The mystery of Onslaught revealed! Phoenix and Juggernaut uncover a long-hidden memory that exposes a secret that will rock the entire Marvel Universe! Onslaught is the event that will have the rumor mill buzzing, and this is the issue they'll be talking about!

ON SALE MAY 29TH



The Further Adventures of Cyclops & Phoenix no.2 (of 4)
Peter Milligan/John Paul Leon/Klaus Janson
Wraparound Cover

Continuing the past history of the X-Men! Cyclops is trapped in 1859, separated from Jean Grey, and missing his ruby quartz glasses! Can he find Phoenix and help prevent the ascension of Apocalypse? A sinister man called Essex holds the key! Peter Milligan and LOGAN's John Paul Leon follow up THE ADVENTURES OF CYCLOPS & PHOENIX with this landmark limited series!



Night Man/Gambit no.3 (of 3)
David Quinn/Dietrich Smith

The X-Men's ragin' Cajun uncovers an amazing secret when he collides with the Night Man and Rhiannon! The conclusion to the dimension-crossing limited series that promises to redefine the Night Man forever!

Wolverine no.103
Larry Hama/Adam Kubert
New 40-Page Format

Wolverine & Elektra-a match made in hell? Don't lose your heart, Logan-literally!

X-Force no.56
Jeph Loeb/Adam Pollina
New 40-Page Format

Guest-starring Deadpool! Siryn and Shatterstar raid the Weisman Institute to rescue the hilarious hit-man! Plus, more on Warpath and Risque!

ARTIST VS ARTIST

Usually in this section we all get to see how Marvel Art Director John Romita Sr. and one of those young artists of today interpret the exact same scene. However, John asked for a little time off so he could concentrate on the umpteen different projects that he has lined up. Instead of getting two inkers to go at it, we decided to try something different and pit two colorists against one another.

The participants: Greg Wright, who will be a regular contributor to this feature, colorist of such books as SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN and SUPERMAN/ALIENS, and Kevin Tinsley, bullpen computer whiz, and colorist of SPIDER-MAN.

They were given a single page of art from the UNCANNY X-MEN, no plot, and orders not to discuss their mission on the phone. The result, as you can see, is quite extraordinary.

Both artists took completely different directions with the art. The difference in their palettes is also remarkable. Greg (left) has a very cool Palette of colors with very deep colors while Kevin's Palette is much warmer and lighter. Although they approached the art differently, they both have similar effects happening. Notice the highlighting on Cyclops. This helps to give the figure form and a dimensional look. They both handled the flare of Cyclops's optic beam in a similar fashion.

One final note about their work is the tools they used to color the art. Greg used water-color dyes and painted the piece, while Kevin used high-quality color markers.

In an age of computer color separations and glossy paper it's nice to remember that without the colorists all our books would be black and white!

DEJA VU

A FAMILIAR LOOK AT THE NEW MARVEL

The start of the new year signaled an exciting structural change at Marvel when former "X" Editor-In-Chief Bob Harras was promoted to Editor-In-Chief of the whole Marvel family of titles. For a short while before this time, the Marvel Universe was divided into five separate groups, each with its own Editor-in-Chief. The initial idea and intentions behind this maneuver were to make the books in each of these editorial families more cohesive and exciting, and subsequently, more receptive to the feelings of the reader.

While admirable, this structural experiment ignored one of the fundamental principles that has always distinguished Marvel from other comic companies—the Marvel Universe is a 'family' of titles. The House Of Ideas is a 'home,' not an apartment building shared by isolated families.

Marvel VISION talked to editors Mark Gruenwald, Bobbie Chase and Ralph Macchio and asked them how it felt to return to a House Of Ideas no longer divided. "I'm glad that I'm allowed to talk to Mark [Gruenwald] again," Chase deadpanned. "I really hated that rule that stated that we were forbidden to enter offices not directly dealing with our specific department. I'm glad that the ban's been lifted." "I would not even listen to her in the hallways and vice versa," Gruenwald continued facetiously.

NOTHING TO SNEEZE AT

Of course, the camaraderie at Marvel has remained, but the previous editorial alignment did present discontinuity problems, among the separate editorial families, problems which those interviewed are happy to no longer have to deal with. "Now that we are down to our fighting trim," Gruenwald explained, referring to the trimming of Marvel's product line that accompanied the company's recent restructuring, "we are actually able to have every single editorial person in one room for the first time in years." "The only mass meetings we would have and when I say 'mass,' I mean the five heads of state [Chase, Gruenwald, Bob Harras, Bob Budiansky and Carl Potts.—Tim]," Gruenwald continued, "were to discuss raises, rate establishment and the latest rumors . Nothing about continuity coordination, nothing about storylines, nothing about anything creative. We have not had a creative meeting company-wide in several years until this January (1996)." The reintegration of the Marvel Universe is being signaled with the "Onslaught" storyline. This universe-wide event was introduced in the X-Men family of titles [UNCANNY X-MEN #322 to be sp1ecific.—Tim], but has spread quickly across the entire line.

"Not that we were splintered," Chase stressed, "but we weren't really participating with each other because we couldn't. We were concerned with our own group families. That's all we had time for, or energy for, or SPACE IN A ROOM for! That's what we were dealing with." With Marvel's return to a cohesive editorial family, readers can expect tighter continuity, the likes of which have not been seen since days of events like Reed Richards and Sue Storm's wedding when all the Marvel heroes of that time attended. Or the "Acts of Vengeance" storyline that crossed over into every Marvel title. "If Galactus sneezes, then the X-Men can react," Chase pointed out. "If Xavier has a milestone birthday party, then the Fantastic Four might show up. That sort of thing."

FASHION FAUX PAS

All three agree that the restructuring has not changed their individual approaches to editing. It merely puts them closer to the field of battle. As Editors-In-Chief and Senior Editor, Gruenwald, Chase, and Macchio's jobs were more advisory, each having, as Gruenwald put it, "a slew of people" beneath them, which removed them further from the books they were editing. The new system puts them closer to the books and to each other. A good example of how unwieldy and prone to lack of communication mishaps the old system was can be seen in the circumstances surrounding a simple costume change. Toward the end of 1995, all that needed to be done was to introduce a new costume for The God Of Thunder, Thor, but with so many middlemen and different editorial teams involved, it turned into a Marx Brothers routine. During writer Warren Ellis's brief but dramatic stint on THOR, the character appeared in his four-issue arc without a shirt. Even by the end of the 'World Engine' storyline, Thor was topless. Ellis was adamant that he not put a shirt on. Thus, editor Ralph Macchio had to set up the appearance of Thor's new costume with incoming writer William Messner-Loebs. Yet, the new Mike Deodato, Jr.—designed costume made its debut in the one-shot...

AVENGERS: THE CROSSING.

"That was a flash forward story," Gruenwald explained, "so that was okay, flashing forward to the time he was wearing it. If we changed the costume before the time 'The Crossing' took place, it would decay the fabric of the storyline." He was also wearing it in the MARVEL VERSUS DC Crossover, so he's got to be wearing it somewhere, so that all his appearances make sense. "The "First Sign" storyline which reintroduced the original Zodiac crime cartel and reunited Thor, Iron Man, and Captain America as Avengers, ran for four consecutive weeks in February. It began in CAPTAIN AMERICA, continued into THOR, then IRON MAN, and concluded within the pages of THE AVENGERS. There is no break between issues. Each week offers the next chapter. "In the third part

only," Gruenwald explained, "he (Thor) is wearing a divergent costume, the one part not edited by the same person. Now you know why they changed the system." The editorial reins of THOR now belong to Chase, who has already approached former editor Macchio concerning conceptual differences he had with new THOR writer William Messner-Loebs concerning Thor's half-brother Loki. According to Macchio, Messner-Loebs wanted to make a couple of Thor's perennial adversaries less evil than they had previously been, specifically the aforementioned Loki and The Enchantress. Messner-Loebs would go so far as to offer Loki ultimate redemption. Macchio disagreed, feeling that Loki should ever remain unredeemable as a natural opposite to Thor. The Enchantress, too, should continue her nasty, underhandedly seductive ways. Chase agreed with Macchio and the two worked together to smooth the transition from edotor to editor, a scene the previous editorial structure did not allow for. Already, the new system exemplifies an easier conveyance of ideas. The days where a character's costume change becomes a continuity nightmare are over.

SECOND BANANA

The return to a solidified Marvel Universe also means a return to guest appearances in the Spider-Man and X-Men titles. Granted, the nature of the X-Men often precludes their doing much teaming up outside of their own mutantkind. Spider-Man, on the other hand, although a sworn loner and more of a street-level crimefighter, shares his heroic milieu with most every other hero in the Marvel Universe. The occasional "bumping into" the Human Torch seemed natural in those early days of Marvel. Yet, somewhere the charm of those chance encounters was lost.

New 'Spider' editor Macchio intends to reverse this trend. He already has plans for Daredevil and Dr. Strange to make appearances in the coming months. "There are such strong ties between Daredevil and Spider-Man. Yet, they have been relegated to different offices over the past year," Macchio remarked. Readers should not worry about a possible tidal wave of guest appearances and crossovers in the Spider-Man titles. Like most Spider-Man fans, Macchio is not enamored of team-ups simply for team-ups' sake. "I don't like Spider-Man necessarily 'teaming up' in an artificial sense," he explained. "I think he almost always comes across—as great a character that he is—second rate in team-ups. He cracks a few jokes. He hangs upside down, and every character he hooks up with looks better than he does. So I am not a big fan of team-ups in that way. Having other characters involved in stories with him where they seem to have their own little agendas is good." Macchio intends to use the "adjectiveless" Spider-title for the appearances of Daredevil and Doctor Strange so as to make the most of John Romita Jr.'s stunning art style. Macchio hopes that fans will be so knocked out by Romita Jr.'s versions of D.D. and Doc, that they will perhaps try out those particular character's own book.

"BEHOLD THE VISION"

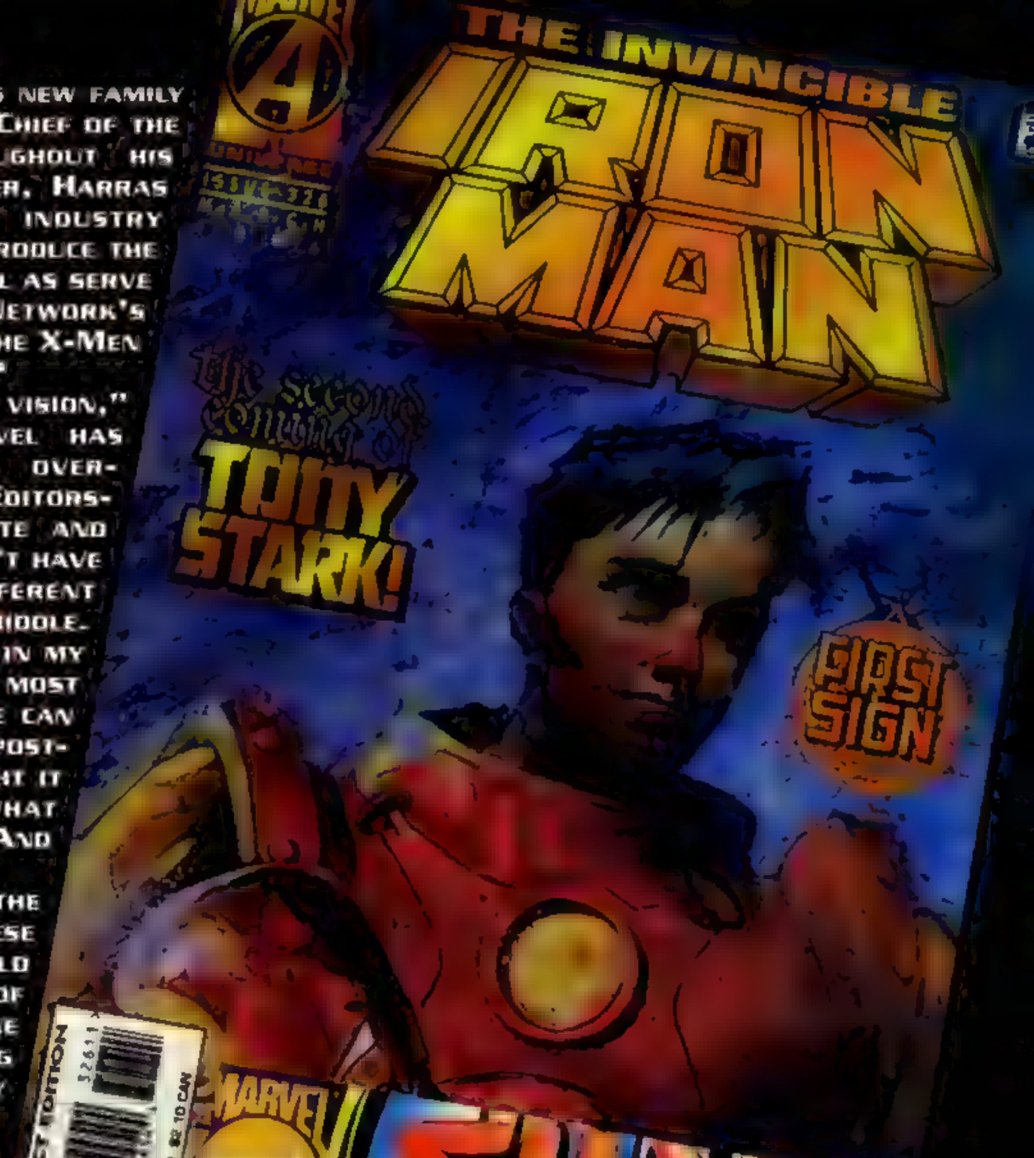
The patriarch of Marvel's new family is Bob Harras, former Editor-In-Chief of the X-Men family of titles. Throughout his tenure as Marvel's mutant leader, Harras has weathered a variety of industry upheavals, and yet continues to produce the most popular line of comics as well as serve as consultant on the FOX Network's popular cartoon series based on the X-Men line. What seems to be his secret?

"He (Harras)'s a man with a vision," Gruenwald offered, "and Marvel has either been under-visioned or over-visioned. When there were five Editors-In-Chief, there were five separate and unique visions. Marvel really didn't have a direction. It had five different directions pitted against the middle. "Now, we have a singular vision, in my opinion. He (Harras) has the best, most commercial vision out there as we can tell by what he's done in the post-Claremont X-Men era. He's brought it to new heights no matter what creative hand he's been dealt. And that's not easy.

"It's very, very easy to let the momentum go from any one of these sales juggernauts," Gruenwald continued. "Just make a couple of wrong creative moves, a storyline misstep, and 'Uh, oh!' Everything that he has done has shown, in my opinion, that he's the man."

Gruenwald, Chase, and Macchio agreed it was too early to tell what kind of influence Harras would have on their titles, having never, until recently, been privy to a creative meeting coordinated with Marvel's successful X-Men editorial staff. "None of us have ever been at X-Men conferences where they have actually mapped out things," Gruenwald explained. "So we really didn't know the behind-the-scenes way in which they coordinated the whole X-Men effort. Now, we've finally gotten a first-hand glimpse of it. "We can't reveal any of his (Bob's) secret methods," Gruenwald stated dryly, "because the competition may be reading this article and suddenly they'll know how to do X-Men-level successes. So we can't really name any of the specific things. Just remember the six "P"s: Proper Prior Planning Prevents P***-Poor Performance." "That's seven," Chase corrected. "You can take the 'P***' off since this is a code-approved book!"

-STEPHEN VRATTOS

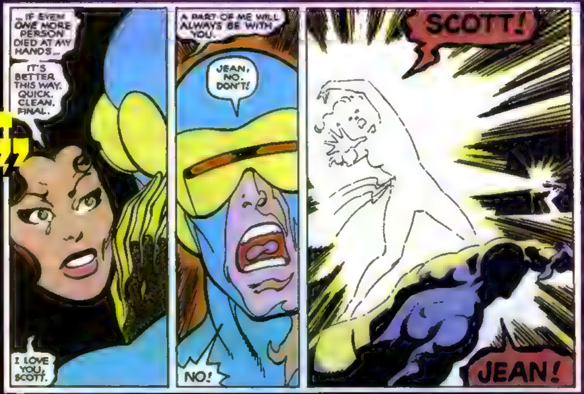


next issue
Bob Harras
Speaks His Mind!

JOHN BYRNE

"DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST MARVEL COMIC?"

John Byrne is a living legend in the comic book community. Not only is his run as penciler on Uncanny X-Men considered one of the greatest periods in the history of comics, but Mr. Byrne's work on Fantastic Four, She-Hulk, Iron Fist, Namor and West Coast Avengers have endeared him to a generation of fans. His revitalization of DC's Superman titles was historic in its scope, just as John Byrne's current run on Wonder Woman is bringing new fans to the age-old amazon. John has also developed a creator-owned series called JOHN BYRNE'S NEXT MEN, a series of which a legion of fans currently hold their breath for Mr. Byrne to resume.



JOHN BYRNE, DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST MARVEL COMIC?

It's still my favorite Marvel comic. And it changed the way I looked at comic books. It was FANTASTIC FOUR #5. Jack Kirby did layouts and Joe Sinnott inked it. In fact, I have an original page from this issue hanging on my wall.

Because of Sinnott's inks, it had a very realistic look compared to the stylistic thing Kirby did later. And even though I would never have used these words then, it had an energy and vigor that made the book something very different. In fact, because my parents limited the number of comics I could get every month, I had to start cutting my DCs just to make room for all the new Marvels.

My favorite scene in the book? Actually there are two of them. The first occurrs involving the Invisible Woman. Dr. Doom had dropped some sort of cosmic net over the Baxter Building and was threatening to drag it into outer space. Sue climbs out on the top of the Baxter Building and Doom drops what looks like an interplanetary bathroom plunger on top of her to pull her up to his ship.

The second scene features the FF dressed as pirates on a search for Blackbeard's treasure. They've all been dumped in the hold. There's this pile of them. The Thing is the first one to wake. He opens one of his eyes and looks all around. I thought that was very dramatic. 'Course in those days, his eyes were brown. Yeah, really. The ever-lovin' brown-eyed Thing.

And the favorite book of which I was involved has to FANTASTIC FOUR #285. It's about this poor kid who sets himself on fire trying to be like the Human Torch. It's called "Hero" and I get asked about it all the time. Then again, "The Death Of Phoenix" in UNCANNY X-MEN #137 and SHE-HULK #8 which features Santa Claus are a close second.

IT WAS NEVER A QUESTION OF ACCEPTING THE ASSIGNMENT. ONLY IN BELIEVING IT WAS POSSIBLE. MARV WOLFMAN, THE LEGENDARY WRITER WHOSE FAME HAS SPREAD LIKE WILD FIRE ACROSS THE LIPS OF TWO GENERATIONS OF FANS, KNEW THE DANGERS INVOLVED AND SAID: YES. ROB LIEFELD, THE CREATOR RESPONSIBLE FOR CREATING SO MANY FAN-FAVORITE CHARACTERS, THEY ARE ONLY OUTNUMBERED BY THE FANS THEMSELVES, ALSO AGREED. IT WAS QUITE A MATCH. BUT IT STILL WASN'T ENOUGH. NOT UNTIL THEY WERE JOINED BY INTERNATIONAL SENSATION PINO RINALDI. THEIR MISSION: TO IGNITE FANS ACROSS THE COUNTRY WITH THE EXPLOSIVE COMIC BOOK PREQUEL TO TOM CRUISE'S NEWEST MOVIE: "MISSION IMPOSSIBLE." ™

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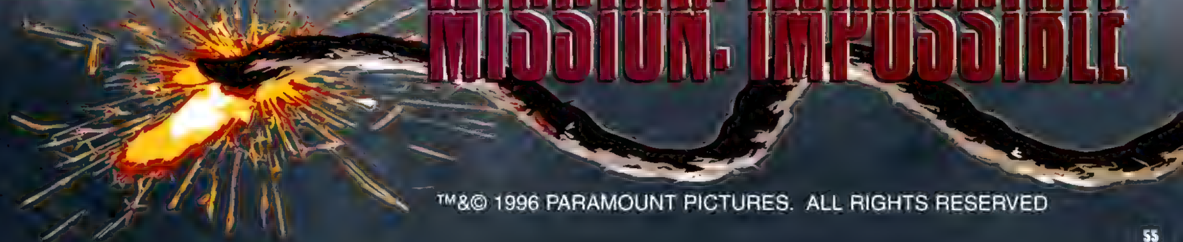

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ON SALE MAY 8TH

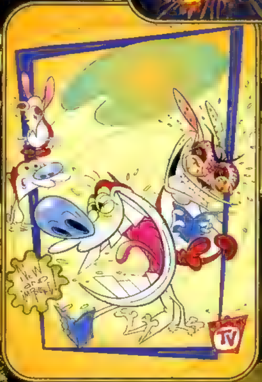
Mission: Impossible no.1 (of 1)

[illegible] Liefeld & Pino Rinaldi

THE TOP SECRET PREQUEL TO THE NEXT TOM CRUISE BLOCKBUSTER! This 48-page adventure features a 6-page adventure by Rob Liefeld and a special untold tale that precedes the May '96, $70 million hit film! Plus: Rob Liefeld, also supplies the extremely cool cover!

Conan no.12

By Crom, Conan's going to kick some serious booty in this issue!



Ren and Stimpy no.44

Put on your jammies and chug some warm milk, it's time once again for Ren and Stimpy's fractured Fairy Tales! This time, it's the nose-exploding story of "Renocchio!"

Saban's Mighty Morphin Power Rangers no.9

[illegible] /Ron Lim/Jim [illegible]

Hide your glasses, the Eye Guy is looking your way! How can the Rangers withstand the blind fury of Lord Zedd and Repulsa's latest threat? (Not Available in the U.K.)

ON SALE MAY 15th

media

Doctor Who no.239

Scott Gray/Martin Geraghty

The Doctor is trapped by a force that knows his every move!

Moebius: The Airtight Garage

Jean "Moebius" Giraud

Available again—for the last time! This 120-page graphic novel continues the acclaimed fantasies of the French maestro known as Moebius. Four years in the making, AIRTIGHT GARAGE breathes with the wondrous and bizarre conceptions that have won Moebius an international following. As Dark Horse Comics releases the sequel to this surreal saga in May, this collection will initiate the inexperienced!

ON SALE MAY 22nd

Beavis and Butt-Head no.29

It's the triumphant (and odoriferous) return of Streculius, the Roman god of feces! After a very special guest spot on the first episode of "Beavis and Butt-Head," ol' Strec really hits the fan this time!

Conan the Savage no.12

Brutes, babes and battle-axes—what Cimmerian could ask for anything more?

Saban's Mighty Morphin Power Rangers: NINJA RANGERS/VR TROOPERS no.8

Is Jimmy a VR addict? Grimlord attacks as the Troopers try to unplug Jimmy from the dangers of virtual reality! (Not Available in the U.K.)

Ultimate Marvel Super Hero Collectors' Guide: 1991

Available again! The 64-page guide to the 1991 Toy Biz figures!

Ultimate Marvel Super Hero Collectors' Guide: 1992

Available again! All the 1992 Toy Biz figures are spotlighted right here, bucko!

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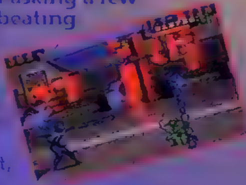
Available again! Learn all there is to know about the Toy Biz figures of 1993!

Ultimate Marvel Super Hero Collectors' Guide: 1994 Alpha

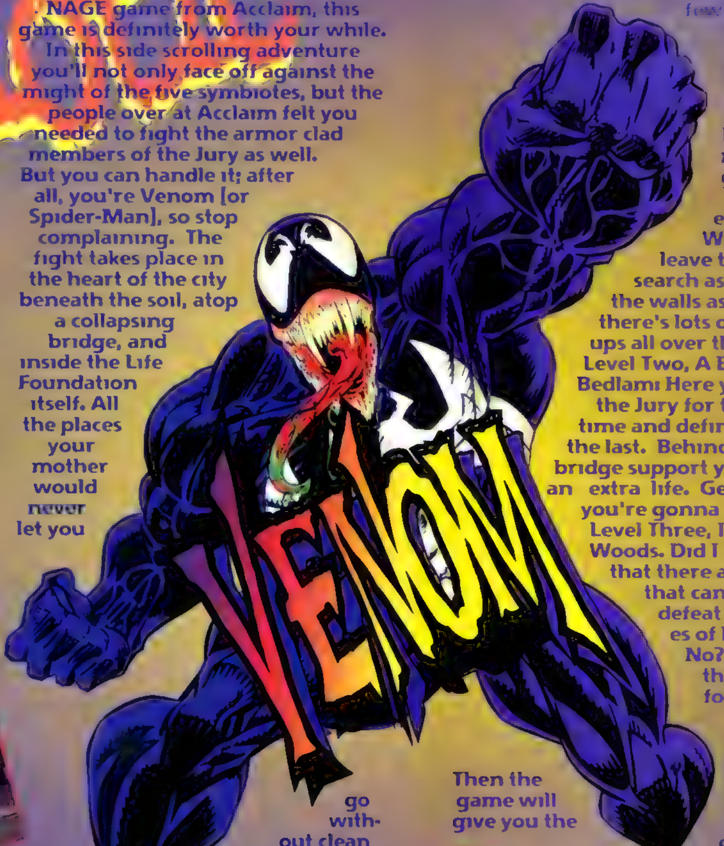
Available again! Covering all the keen Toy Biz figures from the first half of 1994!

Way back in 1988 Eddie Brock bonded with the alien symbiote that Spider-Man found on a distant planet and then rejected. The duo of Eddie and his symbiote would go on to become one of Marvel's top ten most wanted. Venom has faced off against nearly every major character in the Marvel Universe. But it wasn't until recently that Eddie faced a foe alone and not as his signature reference "We." And just before the holiday season Acclaim Entertainment unleashed the symbiotic lethal protector in a game entitled after this popular limited series, Separation Anxiety. In the four-part comic book limited series, SEPARATION ANXIETY, Eddie Brock is torn from his other [the symbiote] and the two are studied like rats in a cage by the Life

Foundation. And as we all know, it wouldn't be much fun if Eddie didn't have to fight for his life to escape and reunite with his other. Only one problem. The Life Foundation managed to create five additional powerful symbiotes from the original [Eddie's] and they're not planning on letting Brock just walk away without asking a few questions and beating some answers out of him. Well, thanks to the creative minds over at Acclaim Entertainment, they made Eddie's job of escape a little bit tougher. And to help him out, they threw everyone's favorite web head into the mix. On sale now and everywhere, SEPARATION ANXIETY: THE GAME. This little trident of excitement is for both



Sega and SNES. You can either play as Spider-Man or as our star of the game, Venom. Or battle head to head in two-player action and bring both Spidey and Venom into the fray. If you're already familiar with and a fan of the MAXIMUM CARNAGE game from Acclaim, this game is definitely worth your while. In this side scrolling adventure you'll not only face off against the might of the five symbiotes, but the people over at Acclaim felt you needed to fight the armor clad members of the Jury as well. But you can handle it; after all, you're Venom [or Spider-Man], so stop complaining. The fight takes place in the heart of the city beneath the soil, atop a collapsing bridge, and inside the Life Foundation itself. All the places your mother would never let you go without clean underwear. After telling you this and getting you really hyped up, do you think we'd let you walk into battle without afew secrets? Think again! Level One, The City: You've got a few things to look for here.



The first is the SECRET ROOM [illegible] who gets in is anyone's gu[illegible] the sign of the first arrow [illegible] you to move on, go the opposite way and to the upper left-hand side of the screen and punch. Once inside there are a few bad guys that go down without a problem. After that little skirmish you get yourself an extra life. When you leave this room, search as many of the walls as you can--there's lots of power-ups all over the place. Level Two, A Bridge To Bedlam: Here you'll face the Jury for the first time and definitely not the last. Behind the first bridge support you'll find an extra life. Get it, cause you're gonna need it. Level Three, Into The Woods. Did I mention that there are heroes that can help you defeat the masses of bad guys? No? Well, on this board follow the first arrow up. Then the game will give you the option of going up or down. Up would be easy, so down [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] first would [illegible] to you to [illegible] the Foundation [illegible] other lives. [illegible]!

Beast Files

SUBJECT: GENESIS A.K.A. TOLLIVER

"Not to engage in the pursuit of ideas is to live like ants instead of men." Yet I'm certain that Sir Mortimer Adler's expression of determination did not have the man known as Genesis in mind when he verbalized this concept. However, it would seem our dear misguided mutant toils, like the ants, toward some unthinkable agenda.

The presumed son of Cable has been quite busy of late. Since his little excursion through time, he has set up shop as an arms merchant under the alias Tolliver. The use of the pseudonym was an attempt at masking his presence from his father. Certain facts have also led us to believe that Genesis had some dealings with the teleporting loudmouth, Deadpool.

Also, Apocalypse has somehow made an impression on Genesis. Genesis's change in wardrobe, the armor which he now wears, is patterned in a fashion representative of Apocalypse. Even his name, Genesis, a reference to the Biblical reference meaning "birth," is surely meant as the antithesis to the word Apocalypse which is known as the End.

One also must consider his recent endeavors. Genesis orchestrated the methodical massacre of the town of Akkaba, Egypt. The exact significance of this location is still unknown. What is known is that the entire population was murdered in cold blood and then impaled on massive spires in some sick, ritualistic manner. What beginning could come about through this ending of life?

"No man is the whole of himself. His friends are the rest of him." Genesis has revived the Dark Riders. They now serve him as they once served Apocalypse.

As I recall, the psychotic mutant Cyber was just liberated from his prison stay in Scotland by the Dark Riders. Cyber is a longtime enemy of Wolverine. Perhaps this is some scheme to remove the competition for the Canuckle-head's hide.

HULK IS STRONGEST ONE THERE IS... no...
I'm Bruce Banner...
a rational man...
not a monster...
must keep control...
concentrate...
resist... desire to... SMASH PUNY HUMANS!
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WOLVERINE
For years I've been fighting to tame the beast inside me.
Why'd I even bother?
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SHIP SHAPE

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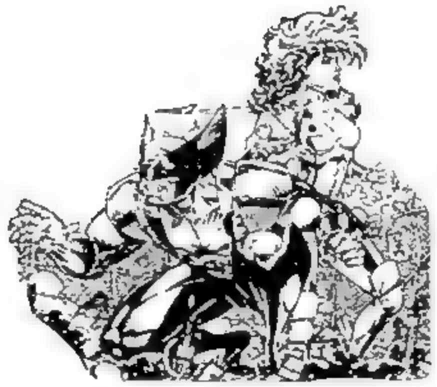

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